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Arab-Israeli Talks

Taba Delegates Cited on Progress of Negotiations

JN1601114894 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 16 Jan 94 p 25

[By 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] Amman—Hasan 'Asfur, a senior Palestinian negotiator involved in the Taba negotiations, has said in a telephone conversation with AL-RA'Y that he, along with Major General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya and Muhammad Dahlan, have, for the past three days, been preparing for the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, which will resume in Taba tomorrow.

'Asfur affirmed that "this team has not left Taba since the halt in the negotiations on Wednesday [12 January]."

'Asfur denied that "there are secret talks between the Palestinians and Israelis," affirming that "the talks have been halted, and that they will resume tomorrow, Monday, as agreed."

'Asfur hoped that progress will be made in the negotiations that will be resumed in Taba tomorrow, affirming that "the Palestinian side rejects Israeli pressures, which are aimed at extricating concessions."

'Asfur added: "We have submitted a compromise to the Israeli side on the issue of the border crossings with Jordan and Egypt, one that falls in line with the spirit of the Declaration of Principles, and heeds Israeli external security, as well."

'Asfur went on to say: "We are awaiting the Israelis' response in the next round of the Taba negotiations." He affirmed the Palestinian side's "commitment to the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles."

The Palestinian official affirmed that "coordination between the Palestinians and Israelis on the border crossings must involve the entire border crossings; that is, from the entrance to the crossing up to the territories that will fall under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian National Authority."

With regard to the size of the Jericho area, 'Asfur said that "the Palestinian side is insisting that it include populated areas as well as historical and religious sites." All these, he noted, must be under the jurisdiction of the future Palestinian authority.

As for the issue of settlements, this is a complicated issue, he said. "However, we hope that we will make progress towards a resolution of this issue," he added.

The negotiations which started on Monday were halted on Wednesday evening so that the head of the Israeli delegation to the negotiations could take part in the funeral of Nehemya Tamari, commander of the Central Command, who was killed when his helicopter crashed north of occupied Jerusalem on the night of 11-12 January.

Dr. Nabil Sha'th has said that 35 percent of the civilian issues discussed have been finalized. The two delegations are yet to address the issues of water problems, planning, and preparations on the ground, not to mention the construction of housing units.

Talks Postponed Until 18 Jan for 'Technical' Reasons

NC1601150894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1358 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Taba, 16 Jan (MENA)—The Palestinian Israeli talks in Taba have been postponed for 24 hours for technical reasons. They will resume on Tuesday [18 January] instead of tomorrow.

Hasan 'Asfur, the head of the Security Committee emanating from the Gaza-Jericho Committee, says the postponement is because Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, is in Tunis, where he is briefing the Palestinian leadership on the course of the negotiations and the obstacles facing them. 'Asfur added that the coming round of talks is expected to last until Friday. The discussion during the coming round, he added, will focus on issues that are the subject of differences between the two sides, primarily the area of Jericho, the control of the crossing points, and the control of the border points between Gaza and Egypt and between Jericho and the West Bank.

At its last meeting, the Palestinian-Israeli Security Committee ran into difficulties due to differences in views over issues relating to Jericho, the security of the settlements, and the crossing points.

As for the Civilian Committee, progress was made on the transfer of civilian powers to the Palestinians in the areas of services and infrastructure. Some points relating to water, archaeology, and town planning remain to be solved in the coming round.

PLO Reportedly To Shun Economic, Civilian Talks

TA1601112194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] The PLO Executive Committee last night decided against resuming the economic talks with Israel, which were due to be held in Paris this week. This was imparted by Palestinian sources to Sa'id Ma'ali, a Qol Yisra'el in Arabic correspondent.

The sources noted that the PLO has further decided to discontinue all talks dealing with civilian matters in a bid to focus on security issues.

Our correspondent notes that last night the PLO leadership held a debate on the results of the Taba negotiations. The participants received a report from Dr. Nabil Sha'th, the chief Palestinian delegate. The Taba talks are slated to resume tomorrow.

Negotiator Notes Issues at Civilian Committee Talks

NC1701111994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1003 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Taba, 17 Jan (MENA)—Jamil al-Tarifi, head of the Palestinian team at the Palestinian-Israeli Civilian Committee, a subcommittee of the Gaza-Jericho talks, has told MENA that the Palestinians and Israelis have not reached agreement on 18 points concerning the transfer of civilian authority, services, and public facilities from the Israelis to the Palestinians in accordance with the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

The Palestinians and Israelis, however, agreed on 20 points in the last round of talks. These, al-Tarifi added, include education, health, social affairs, electricity, and postal services. The points on which no agreement have been reached include taxes, tariffs, city planning, and water supply. The talks, which will resume tomorrow in Taba, will focus on these unresolved issues, he pointed out.

The Palestinian people have a big problem concerning water, because Israeli settlements are exhausting the water resources in the occupied territories, particularly Gaza. Only these settlements, al-Tarifi said, are allowed to dig for water. The Palestinians are not, he noted.

Al-Tarifi said: We insist on our right to issue Palestinian passports and ID's. The Israeli side does not agree to the issuance of a Palestinian passport on the grounds that it is a mark of state sovereignty and therefore unacceptable.

Al-Tarifi said that the Palestinians can exercise civilian authority successfully and without technical or administrative glitches. There are already Palestinian employees working for and running the civilian services and departments. Al-Tarifi pointed out that the number of Palestinian teachers and employees working in the education sector in the occupied territories amounts to 6,800 people, compared with 150 Israelis. We only want them to give us the files and computer data. We can run life in the West Bank and Gaza on our own.

Palestinian Security Committee Head on Talks

JN1801102994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Major General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya, head of the Palestinian team to the Palestinian-Israeli Security Committee, by Sa'id Mu'addi; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Major General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya, head of the Security Committee: The PLO leadership held consultations during the past two days. Has the Palestinian delegation to the Taba negotiations received any new instructions regarding tomorrow 's resumption of the Taba negotiations?

[Al-Yahya] Yes. We and the Israeli side have agreed to resume the second round of negotiations in Taba tomorrow morning. I hope that during this round, we will be able to make some progress on the security issue.

[Mu'addi] Has the Palestinian delegation received special instructions from the PLO leadership on the resumption of these negotiations?

[Al-Yahya] Yes. We received instructions this morning. The Israeli side was contacted on this issue. We only hope that this time negotiations will be successful and productive.

[Mu'addi] Will tomorrow's negotiations in Taba also cover the topics listed on the agenda of the Civic Committee?

[Al-Yahya] Yes. The negotiations will also cover the work of the Civic Committee.

[Mu'addi] What are the topics listed on the agenda of the Security Committee?

[Al-Yahya] It might be correct to say that all issues are listed. So far, we have not agreed on any particular issues.

[Mu'addi] What about the topics on the agenda of the Civic Committee?

[Al-Yahya] During the past round, some progress was achieved. We hope that progress will continue in the same pattern.

[Mu'addi] In light of the consultations that were held with the PLO leadership, do you believe that it is possible to overcome the obstacles and reach an agreement on security issues during this round of negotiations?

[Al-Yahya] Everything is possible. I believe that this issue depends more on the Israeli side than on the Palestinian side.

[Mu'addi] Are there any new proposals or compromises with respect to the pending security issues: Control of the crossings and the size of the Jericho region?

[Al-Yahya] So far, there are no compromises. But I hope that during this round, we will be able to achieve some progress. This round is supposed to continue until Friday [21 January].

[Mu'addi] Will tomorrow's negotiations in Taba take place within the general committee or within the subcommittees of negotiations?

[Al-Yahya] Negotiations will be held within the framework of both the subcommittees and the general committee. To explain, there are now two drafting committees, one on security issues, the other is civilian. There is also a general drafting committee which covers all topics and which will draft a final formula of the major agreement and its security and civilian appendixes.

[Mu'addi] Maj. Gen. 'Abd-al-Razzaq a-Yahya, head of the Security Committee, many thanks.

[Al-Yahya] Thank you.

Sha'th Queried on Progress of Taba Talks

NC1501122294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1115 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 15 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, chairman of the Palestinian delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli meetings to implement the Gaza-Jericho First Agreement, has accused the Israeli side of trying to obstruct the progress of negotiations during the first week of the Taba talks.

He told MENA that this obstruction was very clear in the Israeli statements before and during the meeting. He believes that this might have been due to the fact that the Israelis are waiting for the outcome of the al-Asad-Clinton summit meeting, or probably because the Palestinians refused to accept the Cairo document as a pure agreement, as the Israelis wanted it to be.

The Palestinian official noted that the Labor Party is pursuing the same policy and approach that Likud formerly used. I believe that we can overcome all the difficulties if all the parties show good will, he said, adding: We are willing to do that.

Sha'th said that 'Arafat dreams of a free and independent Palestine, just like everyone else. We know that this is not the right time. We agreed to and committed ourselves to negotiations to find a solution for a transitional period. This means that we know that the time is not ripe yet for an independent state, he said.

The Palestinian official pointed out that the establishment of an independent state requires, first of all, an agreement on self-government in Gaza and Jericho, then in the entire West Bank. After that there can be negotiations concerning the independent state, he said.

Dr. Sha'th accused the Israeli negotiating delegation of demonstrating hypersensitivity concerning what they view as a symbol of sovereignty.

He affirmed that the Palestinian side does not seek to establish an independent Palestinian state at present but that the Israeli side sometimes takes an exaggerated view of the symbols of sovereignty and even the symbols of the Palestinian national identity, which the Palestinian people insist on establishing. As an example, he recalled that Palestinians used to be jailed for hoisting the Palestinian flag.

In his remarks, Sha'th pointed out that the Israelis do not want the Palestinian authority to have its own postal stamps because they take this as a symbol of sovereignty.

Postal stamps might represent some form of identity, but it is not an instrument of sovereignty, he said. He added that Israel does not want the Palestinian authority to have its own telephone area code or to join the International Auto Club, which Palestine was a member of until 1960.

As for the Palestinian currency, Sha'th explained that this issue was discussed by the Palestinian-Israeli committee in Paris. He noted that Scotland has its own currency even though it is not independent of the United Kingdom.

Sha'th emphasized that the Palestinian people deserve to have a national identity and to look forward to obtaining their right to freedom, independence, and equality.

Sha'th spoke about the first week of the current round of negotiations in Taba, which is scheduled to resume on Monday. He said: There were two battles during the first week of negotiations. The first was over whether or not there was a Cairo agreement and who had backed down from it. The second was over what the Israeli side had leaked regarding reaching an agreement with us on Jericho. It was a pure fabrication and they had to deny the same reports that they themselves had leaked. He added: We succeeded in making them announce that there was no document called the Cairo agreement, but rather a Cairo understanding. He added: The fact is that six different versions were written outlining what conclusions the Cairo talks had reached. One version contained seven reservations expressed by president 'Arafat and another included the reservations of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

Turning to next week's negotiations, the head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation noted that he had agreed with his Israeli counterpart Major General Amnon Shahaq to start the negotiations on Monday with a discussion of the structure of the final agreement as the first item on the agenda. He added: We will meet in three committees. The civilian committee, which envisages concluding its work next week; the general drafting committee; and the security committee. He noted that the only items on the agenda of the civilian committee are archaeology, water, urban planning, and land registration, both the state land and the land of absentees [al-gha'ibin]. He noted that a problem arose within the civilian committee when Jamil al-Tarifi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the committee, objected to ending the discussion of civil registration in Gaza without discussing Jericho, which is part of the West Bank. It was agreed in this respect that when the negotiations on the West Bank start in the second stage, these three items [not further specified] will be added and an agreement will be signed, he added, noting that the Israelis wanted to separate the records of the Jericho area from those of the West Bank.

Sha'th pointed out that concerning the general agreement, there are two versions: One Israeli and one Palestinian. He added: We have to look at them once again to come up with a joint document. Sha'th added that the coordination measures had also been agreed upon. He noted that the Israeli side proposed a draft structure for coordination called the Higher Coordination Body, which appeared to parallel the Palestinian National Authority and which was to be divided into two subcommittees, one for Gaza and the other for Jericho. He added: The Palestinians managed to abrogate this body and only keep a liaison committee affiliated to the Palestinian National Authority—similar to the liaison officers present at embassies for instance—to resolve the problems that may arise between Palestinians and Israelis.

Asked what progress the security committee has made, Dr. Sha'th replied that difficulties persist. We have not made any progress because of the Israeli concept of security, he said. He remarked that the current negotiations represent a conflict between more Palestinian independence, freedom, and dignity on the one hand and Israel's eternal struggle for security.

Dr. Sha'th noted some progress concerning Gaza's security. The Israeli side presented to us a new map under which they give us back 8 square kilometers of land belonging to the Palestinians, in addition to 2.5 sq km of the Palestinian lands they had seized to build settlements and 3 sq km of Gush Qatif in southern Gaza, he said. He added that a further 4 sq km on the border with Egypt are expected to be returned as well. We have not obtained the latest map yet, he remarked.

Dr. Sha'th talked about the linking roads that will cross Gaza to connect the settlements to the main road to Israel. He noted that the two sides had agreed to set up joint Palestinian-Israeli patrols along these roads. He explained that Israel wanted to establish five military bases along this main road, in addition to seven fixed checkpoints to protect it.

In general, Dr. Sha'th stated that progress has been made concerning Gaza. He explained that the major points of disagreement right now are concentrated in the area of Jericho. All we have gotten in the whole area so far are 57 square kilometers, he said.

The Palestinian official noted that Jericho is regarded as part of the Old Israeli Alon plan, which the Israelis have not relinquished. He explained that the plan covered the city of Jerusalem and the surrounding settlements. It involved the establishment of settlements along the borders with Jordan, in what the Israelis call the defense line of their security zone on the East Bank to defend against Jordan and Iraq. He remarked that Jericho is included in that zone. He added that the Israelis ultimately want to keep Jerusalem, the Red Sea coast, and the Jordan River.

Sha'th said that the demands presented by president 'Arafat involved the Lido coastal area on the Dead Sea, the al-Maghtas area on the Jordan River, al-Qarntal mountain, and al-Nabi Musa.

He added: We have secured a passage linking Jericho, al-'Awjah, 'Aqabat Jabr Camp, 'Ayn al-Sultan Camp, al-Duyuk village, al-Qarantal hill, and Musa al-'Alami farm.

He emphasized that the Palestinian negotiator will attempt to achieve three objectives that Egypt tried to achieve during the Camp David negotiations. He said that during those negotiations Egypt did not agree to leave one inch of its territory under Israeli occupation, did not agree for a single Israeli settler to remain after the Israeli withdrawal, and did not accept Israeli economic hegemony in the name of normalization. We, as Palestinian negotiators, must adhere to these three objectives, he said.

Sha'th Briefs Leadership in Tunis, Arrives in Taba

Leaves for Tunis With Mubarak Message

NC1501104594 Cairo MENA in English 1025 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, Jan 15 (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, advisor to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, left here this morning for Tunis to hand over a message from President Husni Mubarak to the Palestinian leader on Egypt's role in supporting the Palestinian cause.

In a pre-departure statement, Sha'th said that he will brief President 'Arafat on the development in the Taba talks between the Palestinians and Israelis.

Sha'th added that he will receive from 'Arafat his directives with regard to the coming round of the Palestinian-Israeli talks scheduled to be held on Monday.

Speaking about the coming round of talks, Sha'th voiced hope that the Israelis would not pose any obstacles before the negotiations.

On the coming summit between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton, slated for tomorrow in Geneva, Dr. Sha'th expressed optimism over such a meeting, adding that it will open the door for Syria's return to the negotiations table. If Israel expressed readiness to fully withdraw from the Golan Heights, this would pave the way for Syria's return to the talks, he said.

Sha'th added that there is a Palestinian continuous drive in the peace process pointing out that 'Arafat met yesterday with the ambassadors of the U.S. and Russia in Tunis, the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace march.

Sha'th added that he had talks with the Norwegian foreign undersecretary, who stressed his country's support for the Palestinian cause and his readiness to offer any assistance to make the negotiations a success.

Sha'th will take part in the meetings of the PLO Executive Committee, due to open in Tunis today.

Briefs 'Arafat on Talks

NC1701181394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1705 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Tunis, 17 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Taba talks, left Tunis for Cairo this evening after submitting a report to the Palestinian leadership about the results of the latest round of negotiations with the Israelis in Taba, which ended last Wednesday [12 January].

Before his departure, Sha'th said that the Palestinian-Israeli talks will be resumed in Taba on Tuesday morning.

Sha'th said he submitted to President 'Arafat and the other Palestinian leaders in Tunis a comprehensive report about the progress of the negotiations, especially in light of the problem that Israel caused with what is called "the Cairo agreement" between the two sides. This problem was solved when Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, acting in the interest of the peace process, backed the Palestinian stance.

Dr. Sha'th added that the report he submitted to the Palestinian leadership included his expectations about the future of the Taba talks with the Israelis. He said that the Palestinian leaders held lengthy discussions on this issue, adding that he was given the necessary instructions about it.

Explaining his instructions, Sha'th said they included commitment to continuing the peace process and to achieving results on the specified dates so that there can be no retraction of the schedule set for withdrawal. He pointed out that the dates are an important part of the agreement.

Sha'th explained that Palestinian and Israeli negotiators in Taba are about to formulate a protocol of civilian powers in Gaza and Jericho in a process known as the transfer of powers to the Palestinian National Authority.

He announced: We are about to complete this protocol this week, indicating the transfer of all civilian powers to the Palestinian National Authority.

Sha'th noted that during the round of talks that will begin tomorrow the negotiators will focus on complex issues, including the border crossings, the size of the Jericho area, the Gaza settlements, and the presence of international forces, an important part of the Declaration of Principles.

Sha'th added: If we succeed in settling these issues, we will begin concentrating on the details of other security matters.

Sha'th described the Syrian-U.S. summit as a positive development that brings Syria back to the negotiating operation, something that is bound to help attain a comprehensive peace. He noted that Syria will be returning to the negotiations armed with a full commitment on a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights and the restoration of Syrian sovereignty there.

Sha'th remarked that this is good for the peace process because it emphasizes an important precedent, namely that a real implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 242 means full withdrawal from all the territories occupied in 1967. He pointed out that Egypt got as much in the Camp David accords.

He said Syria is now repeating the Egyptian achievement and the same will be applied to the Palestinian territories when negotiations over the final status are held.

Sha'th said that the Clinton-al-Asad meeting was useful as a precedent and was beneficial because it stressed the principle of comprehensiveness.

Arrives in Taba for Talks

NC1801104794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1015 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] Taba, 18 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political advisor to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, has expressed the hope that the Syrian-U.S. summit will positively affect the peace process in the region. He pointed to the importance of Syria's participation in the ongoing peace efforts.

Arriving in Taba this morning to lead the Palestinian delegation to the meetings of the Gaza-Jericho Committee, Sha'th said the Palestinians want progress on every direction and on every track of the Arab-Israeli negotiations to achieve a comprehensive peace in the region.

Sha'th said that during the new round of talks, which will begin today, he and the Israeli delegation will discuss the border crossings, the size of the Jericho area, and the Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip. He expressed the hope that topics relating to the transfer of civilian authority to the Palestinians will be wound up during this round.

He stressed that the Palestinian side has a real desire to negotiate during this round. He said he hoped the Israeli side has the same desire. He said the Palestinian stance has not changed, indicating that it is awaiting Israel's reply to the papers it presented earlier.

Dr. Sha'th noted that the Palestinians will participate in the coming round of Arab-Israeli talks in Washington, noting that there has been too much delay in resuming these talks.

Dr. Sha'th called for a quick transfer of power in the West Bank and for holding legislative elections in the occupied territories in July 1994.

Dr. Sha'th said the new round of talks in Taba was delayed because he was in Tunis, where he briefed the Palestinian leadership on the outcome of the last round

of meetings of the Gaza-Jericho Committee. He stressed that any progress in the meetings of this committee will positively affect the meetings of the Economic Committee in Paris next week.

Gaza-Jericho Committee Resumes Meetings

NC1801111694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1058 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Taba, 18 Jan (MENA)—The meetings of the Gaza-Jericho Committee began in Taba at noon today with a private meeting between the heads of the two delegations, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, and General Amnon Shahaq, the Israeli deputy chief of staff. [passage omitted]

Islamic Affairs

ICO Ministers Hold Two-Day Meeting on Bosnia

Iran's Velayati Attends Meeting

LD1601111094 Tehran IRNA in English 0919 GMT 16 Jan 94

Tehran, Jan. 16, IRNA—Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati arrived in Geneva today to take part in the two-day meeting of foreign ministers of the contact group of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) [ICO] to follow up U.N. measures to put an end to Serbs crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In the course of the session, to convene today, OIC foreign ministers, while putting emphasis on their past stands, would review latest developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The participants will also pledge their full support for the rightful stands and constructive, flexible role that Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic plays in the peace talks. The ministers will condemn Serbs crimes and blame the U.N. Security Council for failing to adopt a firm stand towards the establishment of peace in Bosnia and would call on the U.N. to make serious decisions in order to fulfil its humanitarian obligations.

Velayati, who takes part in the session at the invitation of President Izetbegovic and the OIC, will encourage the Organization of the Islamic Conference to hold an emergency session of foreign ministers of Islamic countries.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, from the very beginning of the Serbs aggression, has supported the legitimate rights of the Bosnian Muslims and spent its diplomatic efforts over lifting arms embargo against Bosnia, halting illegal arms delivery to the Serbs, putting an end to the siege of Sarajevo and liberating the occupied lands.

Velayati Proposes Visit to Sarajevo

LD1701184794 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1730 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] During the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] contact group session in Geneva today, our country's [Iran] Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati proposed that members of the contact group should visit Sarajevo in order to demonstrate the determination of the Islamic states to offer full support to the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Referring to the shortcomings of the international community in the Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis, he demanded a decisive response against the Serb aggressors and said: In view of the United Nations' failure to create safe havens, we once again ask the UN Security Council to dispatch troops from the Islamic countries to Bosnia as peacekeeping forces.

Velayati reiterated our country's desire to dispatch 5,000 to 10,000 troops to Bosnia and asked the UN Security Council to give the Bosnian Muslims the chance to defend themselves so as to prevent further genocide and ethnic cleansing.

According to a report of the Central News Unit, the Bosnian prime minister welcomed the clear and decisive stances of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Velayati Hails 'Positive' Moves

LD1801115094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign ministers of the Islamic Conference Organization's contact group have asked for practical steps by the Islamic countries to solve the Bosnia crisis. At the conclusion of the group members' two-day session, held to follow up the UN measures to halt the Serbs' crimes, our country's Foreign Minister Mr. Velayati explained some points on the resolution of this session in a telephone conversation with a Central News Unit correspondent in Paris. We draw your attention to his remarks.

[Begin Velayati recording] There are positive and interesting points in the resolution of the contact group session. One of the points is that the Islamic countries will reconsider their economic ties with those countries which have undermined the course of liberating Bosnia and regaining the rights of the Muslims. It is an unprecedented move in practice that the Islamic countries are going to reconsider their economic ties with those countries which support the Serbs directly or indirectly. Such a decisions was never taken before by any international forum, including the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO].

Another point achieved in one of the resolution's articles says that should the United Nations fail to take decisive actions or if the decisions of the Security Council and the

General Assembly are not put into practice, the Muslims, in accordance with the 88th resolution of the 48th session of the UN General Assembly, will feel free [mojaz] to take joint or individual action to help the Bosnian Muslims in various ways. Such links between the ICO and the United Nations were never established before. That is, we have not had such a legal basis, which is acceptable by the international community and at the same time gives a free hand to the Muslims to take direct action to help the Bosnians. [end recording]

UN Urged To Authorize NATO Strikes on Serbs

LD1701154894 Bern Swiss Radio International in English 1500 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign ministers of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] have called on the United Nations secretary general, Butrus-Ghali, to authorize NATO air strikes against ethnic Serbians in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The secretary general of the ICO, Hamid al-Ghabid, made the call during a meeting between members of the Islamic organization and Mr. Butrus-Ghali in Geneva. The Islamic countries repeated a call for the European Union to end an arms embargo on Muslims in Bosnia to allow them to defend themselves against Serbian and Croatian attacks.

Palestinian Affairs

'Abd-Rabbuh Describes Geneva Summit as 'Positive'

JN1701191594 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Dispatch by Muhammad Kurayshan from Tunis]

[Text] A PLO leader has described the results of al-Asad-Clinton summit as positive. Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, member of the PLO Executive Committee, said that the renewed U.S. commitment to achieving a comprehensive and just solution will help the entire peace process. In a statement to our radio, 'Abd-Rabbuh expressed the PLO's leadership appreciation for the stand reiterated by President Hafiz al-Asad in his talks in Geneva yesterday with regard to linking normalization with Israel with a comprehensive solution on all fronts.

The Palestinian official expected the talks between Syria and Lebanon on one hand and Israeli on the other to enter a serious phase. He expressed hope that these talks will witness real progress. He said that, at the same time, he believes that the difficulties facing all parties call for reactivating the comprehensive coordination among all Arab countries or among the five cordon states.

Thus, in the absence of an official PLO stance, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of the PLO Information Department, who was optimistic on the eve of the Geneva summit today believes that the results of this summit were not disappointing.

Rejectionist Radio on al-Asad-Clinton Summit

JN1701210794 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Report by radio correspondents "in the besieged and steadfast West Bank and Gaza"]

[Text] Our Palestinian people's confidence in Damascus has never shaken and they have never been affected by the psychological warfare launched by Zionists and their forces to propagate their dreams about the results of the Geneva meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The stands were clear: Al-Asad, who called for the peace of the brave, was not and will never be like 'Arafat who distorted this slogan and turned it into a capitulatory slogan for the defeatists. Al-Asad, who was the first to raise this slogan, wants it to be clear and frank. He wants peace to be based on achieving justice and restoring rights. The U.S. officials, who dreamed of achieving something from this meeting in the interest of the Zionist entity, did not hide this fact when they conveyed Clinton's impressions about President al-Asad's steady and firm stand on issues considered by Damascus to be among its top priorities and commitments. At the top of these commitments is the fact that the Palestinian vanguards, which found shelter, sympathy, and care in Syria are militant and liberation vanguards that seek to achieve their Palestinian people's freedom and to see dawn on their usurped lands.

Thus, Arab Damascus refutes American and Zionist allegations that the Palestinian liberation factions are terrorist organizations that undermine peace. Clinton said at his news conference that differences with Syria lie in different fields, including the presence of certain groups, such as the Jibril group [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command], as he said in his statement. This reaffirms our Palestinian people's confidence in al-Asad's Syria, which forced Clinton to publicly annul the label of terrorists with which the vanguards of our people were described and to acknowledge the firmness of the Syrian stand.

Therefore, the expectations of some observers have been reiterated; namely, the clear and firm Syrian stand will not be changed by all that has been connoted by Zionism and all that it has planted in the mind of the U.S. Administration in order to keep the United States a tool in its hand.

The al-Asad-Clinton summit very ably disproved the picture drawn before the U.S. President by the stands of capitulation and shame adopted by some defeatists and surrenderers who, falsely, claim the representation of our heroic people. Those defeatists and surrenderers panted in Washington just to put their hands in the hand of terrorist Rabin and to sign the accord of treason with him at the expense of their people's objectives and aspirations.

Greetings of appreciation and pride from our Palestinian people to the stand of brotherhood, fraternity, struggle, and determination to achieve justice advocated by al-Asad's Syria from the beginning of our people's cause when 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam led our people's strugglers, until he was martyred in Ya'bad's jungles, and when Sa'id al-'As carried out his heroic acts, until the full liberation is achieved, God willing.

Delegation To Hold Talks With Vatican Leaders

NC1501083694 Paris AFP in English 0301 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Tunis, Jan 15 (AFP)—A three-man delegation from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is to hold talks with Roman Catholic leaders at the Vatican on Sunday [16 January], an informed source here said Friday.

The object and duration of the talks was not disclosed. The Vatican signed an historic agreement with Israel last month in a bid to bury centuries of enmity between Jews and Christians.

PLO, Egypt Begin To Count Refugees From 1967 War

JN1501205994 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] In cooperation with Egypt and Jordan, the PLO has embarked on a process of counting Palestinian refugees who left the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the 1967 war as a result of Israel's occupation. The Palestinian news agency, WAFA, explains that this count constitutes the first step toward ensuring the return of those refugees. WAFA says that the PLO offices and the Egyptian embassies abroad have begun to count refugees from the occupied Gaza Strip. Newspapers will publish announcements in this regard. The agency adds that the PLO and Jordan will soon begin a similar process in Jordan to count the refugees from the occupied West Bank.

Official Explains Palestinian Constitution

NC1401132294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1050 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 14 Jan (MENA)—The final touches are currently being put to the provisional Palestinian constitution that will be enacted during the transitional period as soon as power is transferred to the Palestinians in accordance with the Declaration of Principles signed in Washington in September. Jamal al-Surani, PLO Executive Committee member and supervisor of the Constitution Drafting Committee, stated that the most important features of the new constitution is that the system of government in the Palestinian state is republican and democratic and it emphasizes the freedoms of individuals and that the establishments, not individuals, rule.

In a statement to MENA, al-Surani said that the new constitution emphasizes the necessity for complete separation of powers and for granting individuals full freedoms, ruling out exceptional laws and nonroutine judiciary. He said that the Palestinian constitution also stresses the need to elect a real parliament to govern and to represent the people. It provides for the election of a head of state for a limited period and through free and direct elections.

Al-Surani pointed out that the committee enacting the provisional Palestinian constitution, which comprises seven senior Palestinian lawmakers, began its work four months ago, noting that the committee sought guidance from numerous constitutions around the world. He noted that the provisional constitution consists of 50 articles. He said that the permanent constitution of the Palestinian state will be enacted by the Palestinian people themselves on their land. He noted that the new constitution emphasizes individual ownership, a market economy, and the gradual provision of social and medical guarantees to the Palestinian people. He noted that it is not easy for a nascent entity to provide for all its people's needs. The constitution, he said, also emphasizes the principles of political plurality and the establishment of diverse political parties to compete in legislative elections.

Al-Surani said that the number of representatives in the Palestinian parliament, according to the constitution, will be in proportion to the population, noting that a system for the election of the legislative council is being prepared to determine the conditions that parliament members should meet. He noted that the formation of the Palestinian government will be the responsibility of the political party that wins the largest number of Parliamentary seats. If no party wins a majority of votes, a coalition will be set up from several political parties. He pointed out that the Palestinian council of ministers will be responsible to parliament and not to the president of the republic and that the council's responsibility will be collective and not individual.

Development Bank To Open in Self-Rule Area

JN1501205594 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Abu-al-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'], director of the PLO's Economic Department, has said that the PLO has decided to open a Palestinian development bank to channel foreign aid to the occupied territories.

In remarks to REUTERS, he said the bank will start off with $250 million, partly contributed by the Palestinian authority and Palestinian and foreign private sectors, including (?French) banks.

Brother Abu-al-'Ala' said the establishment of the bank marks a key step, which, besides facilitating the flow of

assistance to the occupied land, will be the conduit for loans to the private sector.

International aid donors met in Paris last month and pledged $570 million in 1994 toward funding Palestinian projects in the areas due to come under the interim Palestinian self-rule authority.

The decision to set up a Palestinian development bank was made by the accountants of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction when it convened last week. The PLO Executive Committee will meet in a few days to name a constituent body for the bank, which is expected to begin its operations within months.

Algeria

Participation in National Conference Debated

LD1401180294 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Excerpt] The National Council of the Rally for Culture and Democracy [RCD] has been meeting since this morning at the Safir Hotel in Algiers to decide on the issue of participation in the national conference. Mourad Madaoui who is following the proceedings sent us this report:

[Madaoui] During his intervention, RCD Secretary General Dr. Said Saadi assessed the situation in the country and said that it has not changed for two years. Moreover, Saadi said: We have returned to the period of President Bendjedid's resignation. This is what Saadi says and infers from the stances of the sides steering the dialogue. He wondered about the way the RCD could participate and about the form of its abstention, if the council prefers not to take part.

As usual, Said Saadi was aggressive in his intervention and strongly criticized the National Dialogue Commission's [NDC] method of work, affirming that it did not take into account the proposals put forward by some parties despite the successive meetings. The RCD secretary general added that the NDC's role has changed as it is now only directing the dialogue, thus overlooking the political role entrusted to it. [passage omitted]

FLN Decision Referred to Politburo

LD1401204094 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Excerpt] The National Liberation Front [FLN]: Will it participate or not in the dialogue conference? This issue has been entrusted to the politburo. However the FLN has been reaffirming that it will not participate in approving a meeting that excludes any effective political force. The resolution endorsed by the FLN central committee called on the politburo which it authorized to take the initiatives it deems necessary for the national dialogue and to avoid solutions that do not lead to national unanimity.

[Begin FLN Secretary General Abdelhamid Mehri recording] The central committee, out of its desire to avoid useless solutions, asks the politburo not to endorse any authority, and not to employ the credit of the party in providing imaginary legitimacy to such an authority, but it remains prepared to cooperate with any authority which genuinely desires to take the country out of the crisis and restore it to legitimacy and its natural situation. The central committee, out of its concern for the position of the National People's Army and its desire to preserve its position on account of it being a constitutional establishment, expects from it in these serious circumstances to support any orientation for a comprehensive dialogue which responds to the people's expectation to take the country out of the crisis and restore it to a natural situation. The central committee is of the opinion that the proposed national conference is not the only formula for making the national dialogue successful. It reaffirms once again the FLN's attachment to the serious comprehensive and far-reaching dialogue to take the country out of the crisis. [end recording]

Immediately following the end of the session Mr. Abdelhamid Mehri met with the national and foreign press and answered some of the questions relating to issues of national dialogue. The participation in the national conference remains linked to the extent of the development of the stances of the sides involved in the national dialogue.

For its part, the Rally for Culture and Democracy [RCD] held a session of its national council to study the general situation in the country and its attitude toward the dialogue and the participation in the national conference. At the beginning of the session and following a comprehensive analysis of the situation in Algeria at the political, economic, and security levels, RCD leader Said Saadi dealt with the issue of the dialogue. Will the RCD participate in the national conference or not? To answer this question, Said Saadi said that it was inevitable that several points should be discussed, and in the light of this the executive council of the party will decide whether to participate in the dialogue. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Discusses National Conference

LD1501233794 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] The political and economic situation in Algeria, the forthcoming national conference, Algerian-European cooperation, and the AMU [Arab Maghreb Union]-EU dialogue have all been the subject of an interview our Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri gave to the Portuguese newspaper DIARIO DOMINICAL.

Mohamed Salah Dembri reaffirmed on this occasion that Algeria is currently following two courses: political reforms and economic reforms.

About the awaited national conference, Dembri said he expects the participants in this conference to define the measures of the transitional period on the basis of the prepared action program.

Dembri added that presidential and legislative elections will be organized following the interim period, which will last three years or possibly less.

Concerning the participants in the national conference, Dembri said this conference will be open to all those who do not use violence for political aims and to all those who respect the elements that constitute national identity.

In the second part of the interview, Dembri discussed the economic situation. He touched on negotiations with the IMF, noting that Algeria's move to a market economy should not be accompanied by great social upheaval.

Security Services Kill 8 'Terrorists'

LD1601211294 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] The security authorities have announced that the security forces had killed eight terrorists in Boumerdes and Algiers between 11-15 January. They also recovered some weapons and ammunition that were discovered inside a mosque in Bellevue in Kouba.

The same source said (Moubarak Hacene), who was being sought in the case of the assassination of Mustapha Abada, the former director of the national television, was also killed. According to the same source, (Moubarak Hacene) belonged to the Hattab Tewfik gang, which carried out the assassination of former Prime Minister Kasdi Merbah.

The security authorities added that they had killed nine terrorists on 12 and 15 January in Algiers, Jijel, Ghardaia, Bouira, and Boumerdes. The same authorites added they had recovered large quantities of weapons and ammunition.

Opposition Sets Up Radio, TV Network

NC1401144694 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 6 Jan 94 p 16

[Central News Unit report from Paris]

[Text] The Islamic groups in Algeria have set up a clandestine television transmitter that broadcasts programs on an Algerian television channel.

According to a Central News Unit report from Paris citing the newspaper LIBERATION, in circumstances when the Algerian Government has deprived Islamists of all resources and is trying to suppress them, the appearance of an Islamic television network in the country, even for a short time, has perturbed Algerian officials.

Numerous residents in the Algiers area saw the television network's program at 1815 to 1830 last Monday [3 Jan] on channel 21 on the UHF band.

This program presented the latest reports on the condition of Algerian combatants followed by a request to all armed Islamic groups to forge solidarity against the dictatorship in Algeria and still pictures of incarcerated FIS leaders.

According to LIBERATION, the Algerian Islamists are also presenting regular weekly programs, referred to as Wafa [loyalty] radio, by means of radio apparatus. In this program, they transmit radio messages on frequencies used by the police and security forces, repeatedly calling on these forces to refrain from fighting against and killing their own brothers and asking them to abandon the dictatorial regime.

Demonstrators March Against Fundamentalists

LD1701143294 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Excerpt] There was a huge demonstration this morning in Tizi Ouzou in Kabylia—150,000 people according to the police, 500,000 according to the organizers. The march was in favor of recognition of Berber culture, and, above all, against fundamentalism. The demonstrators carried portraits of Algerian intellectuals who have been assassinated in the last few months. The demonstration was led by Said Saadi, general secretary of the Rally for Culture and Democracy. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Clinton Calls Mubarak, Details Meeting With al-Asad

NC1601201194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1955 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 16 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received a telephone call from U.S. President Bill Clinton at 2055 Cairo time. The U.S. President was on board the President's plane, which had just taken off from Geneva.

Clinton informed President Mubarak of the details of his summit with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

Presidents Clinton and Mubarak agreed to continue contacts and consultations to achieve progress and bring viewpoints closer with a view to achieving lasting peace and stability in the region.

Foreign Ministry 'Source' Views U.S.-Syrian Summit

NC1601134394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1225 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 16 Jan (MENA)—A responsible source in the Foreign Ministry has stated that Egypt's position has consistently emphasized a comprehensive solution in the Middle East because there can be no fair and permanent solution that achieves security and stability in the region without a peace that enables all parties to regain their political and regional rights. The source was commenting on the Syrian-U.S. summit being held in Geneva between Presidents Bill Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad.

The source referred to the progress on certain tracks of the Arab-Israeli peace process, noting that there has been important progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track and progress on the Israeli-Jordanian track. He pointed out that the Syrian track has failed to make progress and has reached a stalemate, which threatens the peace efforts. A peace without Syria would be a "lame" peace, because an important party to the conflict would not have resolved its problems with Israel.

The source said that the peace-loving parties pin great hopes on the Syrian-U.S. summit reaching positive results and generating momentum in the Syrian-Israeli

negotiations. He said that the United States has always emphasized its interest in the success of its peaceful initiatives so that the Middle Eastern countries can devote their efforts to promoting their economies. He stressed that there is hope that both Syria and Israel will emerge from the vicious cycle and spell out their real intentions so that peace may be achieved in the region.

Papers on U.S.-Syria Summit, Rabin's Golan Stand

NC1601073194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2240 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 15 Jan (MENA)—The newspapers AL-AHRAM and AL- AKHBAR emphasize the importance of the Syrian-U.S. summit in Geneva, which seeks to give impetus to the Middle East peace process by surmounting the obstacles that have hindered progress in the Syrian- Israeli negotiations.

In an editorial in Sunday's issue, AL-AHRAM says that the Syrian-U.S. summit coincides with Washington's statement that it is holding contacts with all the Arab parties and Israel for resumption of the bilateral negotiations in the U.S. capital and to reach agreement on a specific date for this purpose.

The paper adds: The summit is even more significant because it will be followed three days later by the visit of Jordan's King Husayn's to Washington for a meeting with the U.S. President amid signs that a Jordanian-Israeli agreement is in the offing.

AL-AHRAM notes that promoting the Syrian-Israeli negotiations will also give impetus to the Lebanese-Israeli talks and encourage Palestinian and Israeli negotiators to seek the prompt implementation of autonomy in Gaza and Jericho.

AL-AKHBAR's editorial says the al-Asad-Clinton summit is an attempt to overcome the obstacles to the Syrian-Israeli talks on peace in the Middle East. It notes that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has retreated from his earlier position that his country is willing to withdraw from the Golan Heights.

The paper adds: It was understood right from the beginning of the Arab-Israeli negotiations in Madrid in 1991 that Israel agreed that these negotiations would be conducted in line with UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which call for withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

AL-AKHBAR says this is the solution that can guarantee a real and lasting peace between the Jewish state and the Arab countries in the region.

The paper urges Rabin and his colleagues to think again about the kind of peace that can be attained if Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese territories remain under Israeli control.

Radio on Aspirations of al-Asad-Clinton Summit

NC1501173494 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Commentary by Ahmad al-Qasir: "The Geneva Summit Is an Opportunity To Rescue the Peace Process From Collapse"]

[Text] Political observers around the world are currently turning their attention to Geneva, Switzerland, where the first summit will take place tomorrow between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton in a serious attempt to revitalize the peace process and realize progress on the Syrian track in line with achievements in the Palestinian and Jordanian tracks. This attempt will lead to a resumption of the Washington bilateral talks between the Arabs and Israel to finalize the Middle East peace process that was launched during the Madrid conference at the end of October 1992.

Peace-loving forces around the world are now asking the question of whether the American-Syrian summit will succeed in removing the obstacles before the peace process. In our attempt to answer this question, we begin by saying that this issue depends on to what extent the American role is active and serious in bolstering the peace efforts and convincing Israel to meet the Arabs half way, especially after the latter proved to the whole world the extent of their seriousness and honest desire to live peacefully with Israel. However, this should be based on international legitimacy and the Security Council resolutions that are based on the principle of land for peace, namely Resolutions 242 and 338. This is precisely what the U.S. President and Israeli rulers should realize: That there is a huge difference between a just peace and a peace imposed on others.

Syria has often declared its determination to proceed along the course of peace. It has also been backed by its Arab brothers in this regard, as became clear recently through the statement issued by the foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration countries. It has also participated in all the previous rounds of the Washington negotiations. However, Syria wants an unconditional and just peace that guarantees security for all parties. This is what Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will confirm tomorrow during his first meeting with the U.S. President. In addition, Washington must realize that peace in the Middle East is an indivisible whole and that it cannot be established except through parallel successes in all the Arab tracks. Also, for Syria and Israel to advance the peace process, there must be some trust between them, which is now absent. This absence of trust was also fueled by the stumbling negotiations between the PLO and Israel, despite the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, and by Israel's non- adherence to the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement, which is considered the first step toward peace between the two sides. We believe Washington knows all these facts very well.

In light of all we have said so far, the ball is now in the court of Washington and Israel. If they want to conclude the peace process and put an end to the state of chronic tension in this sensitive part of the world, all they need to do is take serious steps to gain the confidence of Syria, which wants to regain its occupied territory in the Golan Heights without any preconditions.

The Geneva summit is considered an opportunity for the U.S. President to rescue the peace process sponsored by Washington from total collapse. If it is successful, not only will there be progress on the Syrian-Israeli track, but on all the other Arab tracks. In fact, the more important aspect is that if the Geneva summit is a success, it will be considered a foreign-policy success for President Clinton. This will also bolster the status and credibility of the United States in the international arena and within the new world order.

Egypt—represented by President Mubarak—has exerted magnanimous efforts to establish a just peace that provides security and the legitimate rights of the region's peoples. We say: Egypt, which is greatly concerned about peace, hopes the Geneva summit will succeed in realizing its aspired goals and will emerge with positive results that will lead to the resumption of the currently frozen Washington talks in the interest of all the peoples of the region, so that these people can dedicate themselves to comprehensive development and survive in an age of economic blocs.

Commentary Praises U.S.-Syrian Geneva Summit

NC1601145594 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Muhammad al-Sa'id Fa'iq commentary: "Al-Asad-Clinton Meeting Is Positive Step Toward Peace"]

[Text] No Syrian-U.S. summit meeting ever captured media attention like today's meeting of Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton in Geneva.

As far as timing goes, today's meeting takes on great importance, happening as it does when eyes full of hope and expectation are focused on the Mideast peace process and on ways to overcome obstacles to the process.

The meeting is also significant from the political and historical perspective because Syrian-U.S. relations have always been sensitive. The relationship has been unique and fluctuating but it has never been tense to the point of estrangement and never improved to the point of reconciliation and harmony. Hence, the importance of the summit meeting, especially as it takes place at a time when a comprehensive peace and nations' prosperity are a broad international desire, not just limited regional demands.

The U.S.-Syrian summit is truly a summit for Mideast peace. Its timing means the world is reiterating its commitment to establish a comprehensive and just peace in this strategic part of the world. It also means a renewal of international insistence on removing obstacles and solving problems that obstruct genuine progress toward peace.

Proceeding from this concept, the U.S. and Syrian sides agreed to hold the summit. The United States under President Bill Clinton today raises the slogan of a just peace as a course for a new world order in which Washington plays a primary, effective role in handling international politics.

When the situation requires advancing the Mideast peace effort and convincing Israel of the importance of a comprehensive and just peace based on UN resolutions and the principle of land for peace, that is, a complete withdrawal in exchange for a full peace, the U.S. role becomes important and necessary for our Arab nations to achieve the goals of regaining their land and rights without compromising their pan-Arab causes and just demands.

Look at the political and media uproar created a few days ago—in Israel or the United States—by circles opposed to improved Syrian- U.S. relations. By casting doubt about the Syrian stance on peace to spoil the summit's atmosphere and mar the political climate in which the Clinton-al-Asad talks are held, these circles showed that they recognize the importance of the Syrian role in the Mideast peace process. With its political weight and military might, Syria is one of the key influential states in the region playing a primary role in the peace process that cannot be ignored.

If Damascus has explained clearly its firm stance based on a comprehensive peace and on the need to achieve it based on the UN resolutions and the principle of land for peace and on the consideration that the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles is a first step that should be followed by similar steps on other tracks to achieve a comprehensive peace, these hostile circles' doubts about the Syrian stance become meaningless and the accusations fail to achieve their aims.

The U.S.-Syrian summit is a positive step in favor of peace. The agreement to coordinate views and define the principles of a peaceful settlement between Syria and Israel, which basically relies on Israel's complete withdrawal from the Golan in exchange for Syria normalizing its ties with Israel within the framework of a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, is indeed a positive push toward achieving a comprehensive and just peace. It is also a positive effort accredited to the U.S. President to save the peace process from the labyrinth of Israeli deception and their playing for time to avoid the obligations and responsibilities of peace.

Daily Says Clinton Better Understands al-Asad Stance

NC1801075694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2230 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Jan (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AKHBAR has stated that U.S. President Bill Clinton

now knows and understands better Syria's position and its unquestionable right to regain its legitimate rights and the entire Golan Heights. When this materializes, the road to a fair and permanent peace will be open wide. In a commentary in Tuesday's edition, the paper says the meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Clinton clearly showed that the Syrian president conceals nothing and candidly declares his country's readiness to respond positively to everything Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin demands in return for ending the occupation of the Golan Heights.

AL-AKHBAR stated that every sign affirms that the Syrian-U.S. summit was successful by any standard and achieved in one day what 10 rounds of Syrian-Israeli talks failed to achieve. The paper notes President Clinton's complete understanding of the Syrian position and of President al-Asad's stance, despite Israeli Prime Minister Rabin's attempt to portray the talks as a lucrative deal for Syria [words indistinct].

Musa Returns From ICO Talks, Discusses U.S.-Syria Summit

NC1801064094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2305 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Cairo, 17 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa returned to Cairo from Geneva this evening after heading the Egyptian delegation to the ministerial meeting of the Islamic Conference Organization's [ICO] liaison group bureau devoted to discussing the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In an arrival statement, he said the conference discussed Bosnia and the latest European proposals, including the latest NATO Brussels summit resolutions to solve the Bosnian problem, and the Bosnian Government's stance on these proposals. [passage omitted]

Musa described the Syrian-U.S. summit held in Geneva yesterday as successful, adding that it is considered to be an important step, a landmark, on the Syrian-Israeli track and on the peaceful (?course) toward a comprehensive solution. He noted that the Syrian-U.S. summit may give a strong boost to the peace process that began in Madrid on the basis of land for peace. He noted that the peace process is now moving on the four Lebanese, Syrian, Palestinian, and Jordanian tracks.

Foreign Minister Musa Meets With PLO Officials

NC1401193694 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] This evening Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Taba talks. The meeting was attended by Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal and Fatah Representative Zudhi al-Qidrah.

Musa and Sha'th reviewed the results of the meetings of the Taba committee and the security committee which were held last week. They also discussed the obstacles still obstructing the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

Al-Baz on Mubarak-PLO Talks' Boosting Process

NC1601200694 Cairo MENA in English 1904 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, Jan 16 (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign [Ministry] undersecretary and director of the Presidential Office for Political Affairs, today said contacts between President Husni Mubarak and the Palestinian leadership would continue over the coming few days.

These contacts aim at giving peace efforts an impetus to help reach a PLO-Israel Agreement on issues regarding transfer of power to the PLO in Gaza and Jericho as a step towards establishing Palestinian functions in other parts of the West Bank within five months, al-Baz said.

Egypt will pursue efforts and contacts with all parties concerned to overcome difficulties blocking application of the Palestinian- Israeli Declaration of Principles, he told MENA.

PLO's Sha'th Arrives in Cairo, Comments on Talks

NC1701220794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2055 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 17 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, arrived in Cairo from Tunis this evening after delivering a message from President Husni Mubarak to 'Arafat. In an arrival statement, he said that 'Arafat will arrive in Cairo during the weekend to discuss with President Mubarak the latest developments in the peace process. He will also meet with U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ronald Brown, who will visit Egypt to discuss the U.S. role in supporting Palestinian establishments in Gaza and Jericho.

Sha'th said that he briefed president 'Arafat and the PLO Executive Committee members on the progress in the Taba negotiations. He received instructions from the Palestinian leadership regarding the next round of talks that will begin tomorrow morning. He said that during tomorrow's round the two sides will complete discussions of transferring the civil powers and we hope that this week we will discuss the crossing points and the size of the Jericho area. He expressed his hope that the Israeli side will show more flexibility in view of the timetable for withdrawal.

Discussing the summit meeting between U.S. President Bill Clinton and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and its effect on the Palestinian-Israeli track, Dr. Sha'th said that this meeting was met with satisfaction because it represents U.S. recognition of the importance of a comprehensive solution. He stressed that the success of this summit will lead Syria to return to the peace process

under the title of complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights and Syrian sovereignty over them. He noted that this is important to the peace process for two reasons: first, Syria's return to the peace process will lead to Lebanon's and Jordan's return as well, making the peace process comprehensive, and second this reasserts that the implementation of Security Council Resolution No. 242 means withdrawal from all the occupied territories.

Mubarak Receives Saudi King's Message Via Envoy

NC1501152494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 15 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak this morning received a written message from the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia, delivered by Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, Saudi state minister and King Fahd's special envoy.

The meeting was attended by Saudi Ambassador in Cairo As'ad Abu- al-Sa'd.

French Foreign Minister Juppe Concludes Visit

NC1601104894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0955 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 16 Jan (MENA)—French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe left Cairo today, following a two-day official visit to Egypt, during which he was received by President Husni Mubarak. The French minister paid a three-day private visit to Egypt.

While here, Juppe held talks with Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa on the Middle East situation, developments in the peace process, and the upcoming meeting in Geneva between the Syrian and U.S. presidents.

Juppe held talks also with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid on bolstering Arab-European relations. He met with the members of the Egyptian-French Businessmen's Association at a seminar on Egyptian-French economic, trade, and investment cooperation.

Minister Leaves for al-Qadhdhafi Meeting in Libya

NC1701094494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0856 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Sidi Barrani, 17 Jan (MENA)—Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif arrived in Sidi Barrani this morning on his way to Tripoli. Al-Sharif is expected to meet Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, tonight. The meeting is part of the consultations between President Husni Mubarak and Col. al-Qadhdhafi on topics of common concern.

'Deep Differences' in Muslim Brotherhood-Labor Party Ties

NC1801094994 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 17 Jan 94 p 8

[Text] Deep differences have emerged between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Labor Party led by Ibrahim Shukri after the Labor Party agreed to start a national dialogue with other Egyptian parties. The dialogue will take place on the basis of legality and will reject dialogue with illegal parties, a condition placed by the National Democratic Party for any such dialogue.

The Muslim Brotherhood violently attacked its former ally the Labor Party, accusing it of ingratitude. It reminded the Labor Party that thanks to the Muslim Brotherhood, several Labor Party members were elected members of the People's Assembly and other local councils.

A message written by the Muslim Brotherhood's Guidance Office and addressed to Labor Party deputy leader 'Adil Husayn says the slogan "Islam is the solution" is a Muslim Brotherhood slogan and that it is under this slogan that the Labor Party has made headway here and there.

Interior Minister on Corruption, Crime, Terrorism

NC1601061294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2050 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Cairo, 15 Jan (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has announced that 159 cases of bribery and squandering of public wealth were uncovered in 1993, in addition to 760 cases of embezzlement, 2,226 cases of forgery, and 241 cases of currency fraud and smuggling. He said that 3,931 sentences were passed and implemented.

This came in a statement the interior minister made to a meeting of the Consultative Council's Arab, Foreign Affairs, and National Security Committee this evening. Consultative Council Speaker Dr. Mustafa Kamal Hilmi chaired the meeting. [passage omitted]

Al-Alfi said that a firm stand against terrorism comprises a basic part of the Interior Ministry's security plan without ignoring its overall security duties. He said the ministry's security plan stresses a decisive confrontation with terrorism to safeguard stability and the citizens' security while at the same time raising the standard of services to the public and remedying negative conditions in the country's prisons. [passage omitted]

The interior minister said that the current confrontation is based on the security forces always taking the initiative in striking effective and repeated blows against dangerous groups while ensuring that all legal standards are observed. He explained that there is no alternative to a firm and comprehensive confrontation with terrorists because any other course would mean compromising the homeland's future and destiny.

He pointed out that the initiative shown by the security forces has put a decisive end to the exploitation of the mosques in Asyut for the propagation of extremist ideas and helped to uncover the plan to assassinate the prime minister and to apprehend the terrorist group in Shubra al-Khaymah that had been instructed to carry out a series of assassinations and other terrorist acts. [passage omitted]

The interior minister revealed the existence of bilateral agreements to extradite terrorists, noting that several of them have been extradited from abroad and several others will be extradited shortly. He said this is being done with the help of other government departments.

Concerning the disappearance of former Libyan foreign minister Mansur al-Kikhya, the interior minister said: We have not uncovered the facts of the case yet. We cannot say anything if we are not sure of it.

He said he is totally opposed to indiscriminate arrests and that only the actual culprit must be punished. Adding that he will not hesitate to question and punish anyone who makes a mistake, he said daily inspections must be made in all governorates and central police stations to maintain proper performance standards and ensure that members of the public brought to police stations are well treated. [passage omitted]

Government Categorizes Antistate Activities

NC1801095194 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 17 Jan 94 p 7

[Text] The Egyptian security service has divided antigovernment activities into the following categories:

1. Al-Shawqiyun specialize in robbing Christian-owned jewelry shops to finance their movement;

2. The operations of al-Jihad group and al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah are confined to military activities against tourism and tourists; and

3. The Vanguards of Conquest specialize in carrying out assassinations and explosions against officials and security men.

It is worth noting that all these groups also participate in acts of violence and attacks in all places.

Ministry Pays 'Militant' To Leave Radical Group

NC1701063194 Paris AFP in English 2142 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, Jan 16 (AFP)—The Egyptian interior ministry has paid a Muslim militant 20,000 pounds (6,000 dollars) for leaving a radical group involved in anti-government activities, the police said Sunday.

'Adil Muhammad 'Abd-al-Baqi, a key member of Al-Shawqiyun which is based primarily in al-Fayyum south-east of Cairo, had decided to leave the organisation and declared he had repeated by condemning its terrorist activities, they said.

But the police provided no details on the conditions surrounding his surrender or any possible charges that may be brought against him.

Last month the ministry gave out rewards of 100,000 Egyptian pounds (30,000 dollars) to three people who provided police with information on a fundamentalist involved in a car bomb attack that almost killed Egyptian Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi on November 25.

The ministry recently announced it would pay 100,000 pounds to any person providing information leading to the arrest of a wanted fundamentalist.

Muslim militants in Egypt have since March 1992 launched a bloody campaign to topple the secular government of President Husni Mubarak by targeting senior officials, policemen, tourists and Coptic Christians.

Opposition Parties Welcome National Dialogue Call

NC1401221294 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Opposition party leaders have given unanimous and warm support for President Mubarak's call for national dialogue. The opposition party leaders confirmed the country's dire need for such a dialogue in order to discuss the various aspects of political reform and the way to confront terrorism.

Kamal al-Shadhili, National Democratic Party [NDP] assistant secretary general, said that during the first session of the newly formed NDP Secretariat, President Mubarak defined the NDP's policy vis-a-vis the opposition parties. President Mubarak said that the NDP is committed to national dialogue and its goals and to creating the right atmosphere for holding it. Dialogue, Mubarak said, has to take place in a political framework conducive to promoting the country's supreme interests.

Al-Shadhili added that dialogue represents one part of the NDP's wide-ranging political bid to mobilize the country's forces and consolidate the home front in the face of the challenges facing Egypt, particularly that of terror.

Meanwhile, the secretary general of the National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party described the call for national dialogue as a civilized and positive step worthy of cooperation and every effort to make it succeed.

Presidential Office Head Sues AL-SHA'B for Slander

NC1401195494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1630 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 14 Jan (MENA)—MENA has learned that Dr. Zakariya 'Azmi, head of the presidential office and a People's Assembly member, has submitted a complaint to Attorney General Raja' al-'Arabi against the newspaper AL-SHA'B regarding a report that it published in today's issue.

The complaint stated that the newspaper's report is totally unfounded and that the claims made in it are a figment of the writer's imagination. Dr. 'Azmi stressed that the newspaper's report constitutes slander against him and his reputation and therefore is an act punishable by law.

AL-SHA'B reported that Dr.'Azmi is a partner of Madinat al-Nasr multimillionaire Fawzi al-Sayyid, who is under arrest for committing violations in the construction of high-rise buildings.

Minister on Corruption, Moves Against 'Terrorists'

NC1401202794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1635 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 14 Jan (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has stated that the Interior Ministry's investigation departments continue their battle against deviation and corruption and apprehend the perpetrators immediately.

In a statement following the inauguration of the renovated general traffic department building in Madinat al-Nasr today, al-Alfi asserted that the state is exposing any deviation, corruption, or breach of the law, that confronting corruption is the state's policy, and that no one is above the law.

On reports that some security officials are involved in the case of the Madinat al-Nasr multimillionaire, who was arrested recently, al-Alfi said that no conclusive evidence has been brought against any security official and that the current reports are mere rumors.

Al-Alfi added that the prosecutor is conducting his investigations. Therefore, no premature judgment can be made. However, if there were violations or someone was involved, this will show up in the investigations. No one is above the law.

On the security forces' efforts to hunt down terrorists, especially in Upper Egypt, and their shift to a defensive position, al-Alfi denied this, stressing that the security authorities have always been in control of the situation and that they continue to take the initiative in tracking down the terrorist elements.

He explained that the security authorities continue their work day and night to confront any deviations or incidents committed against the state's security and stability.

On Pakistan's expulsion of terrorist elements from its territory and whether any of these terrorists have been arrested, al-Alfi explained that there are continued contacts with a number of states in this regard.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Ukrainian Envoy

LD1701150294 Tripoli JANA in English 1415 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Tripoli ay-Annar [January; dateline as received]—Jamahiriyah News Agency—The leader of the revolution received Mikhayl Pavlovych, the personal envoy of the president of the Republic of Ukraine.

The envoy delivered a message from Ukranian President Leonid Kravchuk.

Cooperation Protocol Signed

LD1701143694 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] A protocol on cooperation between the Great Jamahiriyah and Ukraine in the economic, commercial and cultural spheres as well as in the spheres of oil, transportation and installations was signed in Tripoli at noon today.

The protocol was signed for the Libyan side by the brother assistant secretary general for international affairs of the General People's Committee for International Liaison and International Cooperation, and for the Ukrainian side by Mikhayl Pavlovych, head of the first directorate of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry.

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Egyptian Information Minister

LD1801013594 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 2315 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution received brother Safwat al-Sharif, information minister in sisterly Egypt and personal envoy of President Husni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

The personal envoy delivered to the brother leader of the revolution a message from President Husni Mubarak in connection with the fraternal relations between the two fraternal countries as well as a number of Arab and international issues of common interest.

Al-Kikhya Said Killed; Cairo Says Still in Egypt

NC1801090194 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 17 Jan 94 p 9

[Text] Fayil Jibril, official spokesman of the Libyan opposition in Cairo, says he has information, the source of which he has not revealed, that Mansur al-Kikhya, former Libyan foreign minister and head of the opposition Libyan Democratic Grouping, was abducted and killed the day after he arrived in Libya.

But Egyptian Interior Minister Major General Hasan al-Alfi says he has information that al-Kikhya is still at an unknown location in Egypt and has not been moved abroad.

'Source' Welcomes PRC Stance on UNSC Changes

LD1601152294 Tripoli JANA in English 1437 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Tripoli, A'ina Al-Nar [January] 16, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—A source at the Secretariat of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation welcomed the stance of China towards changing the U.N Security Council [UNSC] as declared by the spokesman of the Chinese Foreign Ministry asserting China's refusal of any change in the Security Council before submitting the matter to all U.N member states for debate and that the restructuring of the Security Council to include Germany and Japan would not fulfil the desire of some countries.

In a statement to JANA, the source said "while we welcome the Chinese stance and support it, we would like to stress that this stance coincides with continuous call of the Great Jamahiriyah for the [word indistinct] reconstruct the U.N granting all peoples a role on the basis of justice and equality in accordance with its charter to which those peoples responded to the invitation to join this international organisation especially as the smaller nations began to fear for their future before the current state of the U.N which became the voice of only the major countries hence the international organisation is being harnessed to serve the interests and objectives of most powerful countries. [no closing quotation marks as received]

The source pointed out that the Great Jamahiriyah, being at the forefront of the peoples harmed by the current situation and control of the Security Council by the major powers, sees in the stance of China a major support for the position of the smaller nations who are fearing for their future in the light of the change of international organisation into an instrument of threats against peoples and plots against their future and spreading war amongst them instead of being a secure refuge for peoples seeking to safeguard their future, an instrument for the protection of their rights and maintenance of a genuine peace in the world.

The leader of the revolution pointed out, on many occasions, that the time has come for the restructuring of the U.N and changing the Security Council as an organ of all nations and that this change is the right of all member states and peoples to whom it should be referred and discussed and express an opinion about it and that the move towards opening the door of granting permanent membership and veto in the Security Council only to the industrial major powers is an orientation to crush the smaller nations who suffered a great deal from the monopoly of veto by the major powers for which these nations continue to pay the price.

Thus the revision of the veto power is required so that the decision making power should lie in the hands of the General Assembly or the in the hands of all member peoples of this organisation.

Citizens Urged To Boycott Switzerland Over Sanctions

LD1601115494 Tripoli JANA in English 0808 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Tripoli, A'ina al-Nar [January] 16, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY— Switzerland declared that she will start the implementation of the tightening of the coercive measures imposed by the Western countries through the so-called Security Council. This came in a statement by the Swiss Foreign Ministry.

Switzerland claims that she is a neutral country and many Libyans go there for medical treatment at her hospitals supporting her economy through spending. Accordingly the Libyans should take note of this as they declare daily their defiance of the embargo and readiness for confrontation.

Sudan

PRC Foreign Minister Meets Vice President, Counterpart

EA1501204894 Khartoum SUNA in English 1645 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Khartoum, 15 Jan (SUNA)—Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, vice president, met the Chinese deputy chairman of the State Council and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen.

The meeting reviewed the process of relations between the two states and ways of boosting and promoting them in all fields.

Maj. Gen. Salih presented an explanation to the guest about the achievement scored under the salvation revolution, stressing that they were realized due to citizen confidence in the orientations of the revolution. [sentence as received]

The foreign minister, Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih, conducted talks with the Chinese deputy prime minister and foreign minister, Qian Qichen, on exchanging views

for supporting and promoting friendly cooperation between the two countries and the situation in the region.

Dr. Abu-Salih said the Sino-Sudanese ties remained historically good and based on respect of sovereignty, noninterference in the internal affairs and mutual interests between the two states, saying that the views of the Chinese minister agreed with the Sudanese political targets.

Anwar al-Hadi, director of the Political Affairs Department at the Foreign Ministry, said in a statement to SUNA that the two sides internal affairs of the states and affirm the freedom of the countries to choose their political, economic and development approach. [sentence as received]

Sources close to the Chinese minister said that Qichen [as received] expressed satisfaction over the efforts being exerted by the government internally to realize national unity and economic development, stressing that China respected sovereignty of the states and stood by the peoples expressing hope that the Sudanese would realize more successes to restore economic development and political stability.

Qichen reviewed during his meeting with his Sudanese counterpart the achievements scored under the open-door economic policy in China, affirming internal political stability, international peace [and] good-neighbourly relations as basic elements to realize and promote economic development, the source added.

Qichen extended an invitation to his Sudanese counterpart to visit China.

PRC Delegation Concludes Visit

EA1601192494 Khartoum SUNA in English 1650 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Khartoum, 16 Jan (SUNA)—Chinese vice premier and foreign minister, Qian Qichen, and the accompanying delegation left Khartoum Saturday evening [15 January] after two-day talks with senior government officials on issues of common concern and means of boosting the Sino-Sudanese relations for the interest of the two countries.

In a press statement to Sudan the industry and commerce minister, Dr. Taj al-Sirr Mustafa ['Abd-al-Salam] said that the economic and technical talks between the two sides covered the bilateral cooperation in the strategic economy, basic services, social developmental projects, and the investment and commercial fields.

Dr. Mustafa stated that the Sudanese side has affirmed its readiness to expand cooperation with the Chinese public and private sectors in the field of investment adding that the Chinese delegation also expressed a similar desire.

The Chinese side asserted that its visit to Sudan was intended to consolidate further the distinguished ties between the Sudan and China, he said.

The industry and commerce minister also indicated that the Chinese side agreed on holding the Sino-Sudanese ministerial committee's meeting this year saying that the Chinese side declared it's commitment to boost implementation of the outcome of the joint economic and technical committee's meeting. [passage omitted]

Iranian Construction Minister Arrives on Visit

EA1701174994 Khartoum SUNA in English 1020 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Khartoum, 17 Jan (SUNA)—The Iranian construction minister arrived in Khartoum on Sunday heading a high-level delegation on a several day visit to the country. [passage omitted]

The Iranian construction minister asserted in a press statement upon arrival that the visit comes in the context of boosting bilateral relations in the various fields which emanate from the Islamic motive linking Sudan and Iran.

He added that he was accompanied by representatives of the different Iranian ministers noting that talks would be held between the two sides notably on a number of trade issues. The Iranian minister hoped that the talks would be fruitful toward gaining more consolidated bonds in other issues and creating new mechanisms with the aim of boosting mutual cooperation between the two countries.

He also said he would visit the projects of the Iranian Jihad Construction Organization in the Sudan.

Many agreements which have been concluded between Sudan and Iran have been implemented in the last period, he explained, indicating that the visit aimed at finding appropriate methods towards implementing the agreements concluded between Iran and Sudan. [passage omitted]

Upper Nile Governor Says Rebels To Negotiate

EA1701191994 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1530 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Khartoum, 17 Jan (SUNA)—Engineer Gwang Tonj, governor of Upper Nile State, has said that the state is experiencing widespread security thanks to cooperation between many quarters and to the negotiations between the rebel united movement, the Nasir wing, and the government. The Nasir wing [Riak Machar's rebel faction] had agreed to negotiate with the government without any intermediary and rejected the outcome of the Washington symposium.

In a press conference he held here today, he said that the government was determined to bring about security and stability. He said that displaced persons had been

removed to towns prepared for them where all the necessary services were provided. He said that there was stability in the school system at all levels and the University of the Upper Nile would begin work at the beginning of April. He added that the state had drawn up plans for the eradication of illiteracy.

His Excellency also said that the citizens of Upper Nile had welcomed the decision on the redivision of states which aimed to bring the authorities nearer to the citizens and would also provide the opportunity for everyone to take part in governing. He went on to say that the state was determined to achieve peace and development to build the nation. He confirmed that the citizens of the state support the revolution's proposals on participation in power for the building of Sudan.

Cairo-Based Opposition Said Plotting With Machar

EA1701170294 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] A responsible source at the General Command of the People's Armed Forces has stated that the Cairo-based elements of the opposition alliance have begun contacts with the rebel Riak Machar, with the objective of planning what they call the bringing down of the Khartoum government.

The source confirmed that Riak Machar had received a number of letters from Mubarak al-Fadil and Umar Nur al-Da'im through their contact, Hashim Muhammad Ali Ziyadah, expressing their regret that they did not consult one another in Washington to enable them to overthrow the government. They expressed their full support for him, as the lies of John Garang had become clear to them, as had the fact that the coup against Garang at Nasir was not Khartoum- inspired. They said that their support for him would be through the humanitarian organization which he founded under the name of Medical in Need [preceding three words in English]. They invited him and his group to attend the national constitutional congress which the opposition is planning to hold in Cairo, by sending his observers.

Satellite Broadcasts Begin; Coded Service To Follow

NC1401165794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1450 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Khartoum, 14 Jan (MENA)—The Sudanese Satellite Channel will start broadcasting its television programs in Arabic and English for all Sudanese citizens tomorrow. There will be three transmission periods daily. Broadcasting will last one and a half months after which a coded service will be available only for subscribers.

The board of directors of the Sudanese Satellite Channel Company held a meeting at which it approved the weekly and monthly programs now that a coded service has become available for subscribers.

The company, which will receive satellite channel transmissions and rebroadcast them for subscribers only, was formed in partnership by the National Television Organization, the Telecommunications General Organization, and the Ministry of Culture and Information.

Statement Issued on U.S.-GCC Meeting

LD1701205094 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] A press statement has been released on the meeting held yesterday at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] between the GCC and the United States. The GCC side was chaired by Sulayman al-Sulayyim, Saudi minister of commerce and current chairman of the GCC Committee for Trade Cooperation. The U.S. side was chaired by His Excellency Secretary of Commerce Ronald Brown. According to the press statement, the meeting was attended by 'Abdullah al-Quwayz, the GCC assistant secretary general for economic affairs, Ambassador Ma'mun Kurdi, the general coordinator of economic negotiations in the GCC, a number of officials representing specialized sectors in the GCC member states, and U.S. officials.

The statement welcomed the continuation of the economic dialogue between the GCC member states and the United States, and stated that this dialogue helped strengthen economic cooperation between the two sides in line with the strategic political ties existing between them. The statement also stressed the need to expand and diversify economic relations and improve the movement of goods between markets on both sides. The statement pointed out that the two sides had agreed to cooperate in the field of specifications and standards and to remove trade barriers.

The statement referred to wider participation and a contribution in the development of investment opportunities, as reviewed by the conference of businessmen from GCC member states and the United States held in Washington 20-21 April 1992. The statement added that this conference was a good opportunity for both sides to exchange information on the perspectives of investment, particularly with regard to the new companies in the markets. The statement supported the idea of holding similar conferences once every two years and it welcomed Bahrain's offer to host the next conference in 1995.

The statement further said that the two sides had agreed to set up two working groups, one to look into the possibilities of practical and technical cooperation and the other to examine and discuss the opportunities and the obligations resulting from the GATT system and the Uruguay agreements, facilitate the entry of the GCC member states to the GATT agreement, and find the necessary means to expand the perspectives of trade between the GCC member states and the United States.

The two sides also agreed to start negotiations with a view to drafting a memorandum of understanding in the field of specifications. The statement added that the two sides agreed on the need and importance of setting up a free and open world trade system.

Kuwait

Foreign Minister on Arab Ties, Reconciliation

JN1701203094 Al-Shariqah AL-SHURUQ in Arabic 13-19 Jan 94

[Interview with Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, by Buthaynah Abu-'Ubayd in Abu Dhabi; date not given]

[Excerpt] [Abu-'Ubayd] Kuwait has concluded defense treaties with the big powers, but it has failed on the Gulf and Arab axes. What do you have to say about this?

[Al-Ahmad] Who told you that it has failed. As an official, who is aware of the situation, I announce that it has succeeded on all fronts to protect its sovereignty and independence. Everyone knows that the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] member states all participated, even shed their blood, in the liberation of Kuwait. After liberation, we have continued to coordinate joint defense among the GCC states. This shows cooperation among these states. On the Arab front, there is no difference. There are Arab states that participated in the battle of liberation such as Egypt and Syria. After this, we cooperated within the framework of the Damascus Declaration.

[Abu-'Ubayd] How true are reports about the collapse of the Damascus Declaration?

[Al-Ahmad] May God forgive us. Where did you get such an idea? If this is true, then we must say that all our meetings in the Arab world are unsuccessful.

[Abu-'Ubayd] This year is expected to witness important developments in the Western stands toward Iraq. The recent visits by three senior Western personalities to Iraq indicate the possibility of ending Iraq's diplomatic isolation. Are you concerned about the exertion of pressure on Kuwait in this regard?

[Al-Ahmad] First of all, it saddens me to even have to deny any reports on the existence of pressure on Kuwait concerning its policy. Basically, this is something that should not be said. Second, these personalities' visits to Iraq took place for specific reasons pertaining to the release of Western hostages. However, we should not say that there are no interests in ending the isolation. However, these interests will begin when the problems end. From this premise, everyone now wants to stake claim, pending a solution of the current issues.

I would like to reaffirm that the diplomatic isolation imposed on the Iraqi regime should not be lifted for two simple reasons: First, If some say that Iraq has agreed to implement Resolution 715, which was issued as a result of the occupation of Kuwait, then this resolution is still linked to other resolutions. In this case, the implementation must be full and comprehensive, including all UN resolutions. As regards the Iraqi regime, I believe that no

state should extend bridges to those who starve and displace their own people and carry out the ugliest forms of torture against them.

[Abu-'Ubayd] Your statements in which you call for differentiating between the Iraqi regime and people appear contrary to the facts on the ground.

[Al-Ahmad] What you are saying is very strange. You might not know that Kuwait has sent relief aid to the Iraqi people, particularly those expelled by the Iraqi regime in the north and south.

We differentiate between the regime and the people. We hope we can help the people inside Iraq, because we are not pleased to hear that a fraternal people are being exposed to starvation and coercion.

[Abu-'Ubayd] Your continuous denial of secret talks with "anti- Kuwait" states shows that Arab reconciliation is more unlikely than before, despite the continuous attempts by these countries and some Arabian Gulf states to bring you closer together with these countries. Will the coming days witness the success of these attempts?

[Al-Ahmad] I want you to answer this question: On what basis shall these attempts succeed and the reconciliation be achieved? What happened was caused by a problem. Therefore, if the problem ends the reconciliation will begin. If reconciliation takes place now it will be futile. I hope peace will prevail and all repercussions of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait will end. I hope peace will be achieved. But, when? I do not know. As long as differences exist in the Arab world everything will remain unresolved.

[Abu-'Ubayd] What is your opinion of the [Arab-Israeli peace] settlement?

[Al-Ahmad] Regarding the settlement, we welcomed the Palestinian-Israeli agreement as a first step. We hope that agreements will be reached on all levels, otherwise, there will be no progress on the path to peace.

[Abu-'Ubayd] What will happen if this step fails?

[Al-Ahmad] I hope this will not happen. Even if this step fails, the road to peace will not be closed. This road has been opened and the first steps have begun. [passage omitted]

Minister Previews GCC-U.S. Trade Talks

LD1401224194 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1730 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 14 Jan (KUNA)—Kuwaiti Trade and Industry Ministry Undersecretary Dr. Walid 'Abd-al-Muhsin al-Wuhayyib today left the country leading a Kuwaiti delegation to attend the preparatory meeting of the negotiating delegation consisting of the representatives of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] member states in readiness to meet on 16 January with the U.S. team. Prior to his departure al-Wuhayyib stated that the GCC looks forward for the meeting with the U.S. side to lead to a document which defines the aims of these talks and a program of action to be realized. He pointed out that the Saudi minister of trade will be leading the GCC side while the U.S. secretary of trade will lead the American side.

Al-Wuhayyib added that the GCC secretariat general intends to submit the agreement on free trade exchange which was not accepted before by the U.S. side, but following the endorsement of the free trade agreement of North America, and reaching an agreement at the end of the Uruguay round within the GATT framework, "circumstances may be suitable for the submission of this proposal by the GCC." He also said that the unified Gulf delegation will discuss with the American side too the subject of investment and methods of encouraging it, industrial cooperation, science and technology and rights of individual ownership. He said that negotiating with a superpower such as the United States with a unified Gulf delegation reflects the cohesion of the GCC member states and reaffirms that progress is being made along the path of integration. [passage omitted]

'Disgraceful' U.S. Stands, 'Weakness' of Clinton Condemned

JN1601165894 Kuwait AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM in Arabic 13 Jan 94 p 1

[Editorial: "The Lost Opportunity"]

[Text] U.S. President Bill Clinton has wasted a valuable and unique opportunity to restore confidence in the role of the United States and to reaffirm that it is qualified to lead the world toward a new international order. He did this when he failed to wrench an approval from his partners in NATO on a proposal for concentrated air strikes on Bosnia that would end the continuous Serb attacks on Muslims. When we recall that the United States itself presented this proposal last August, we realize that the U.S. President's weakness, which was clearly manifested at the Brussels summit, is a result of a state of reluctance and confusion that prevails in the decisions and stands of the U.S. Administration. This U.S. Administration is wasting a great inheritance of military and political glory created by [former] President George Bush's administration when it stood against the Iraqi aggression on Kuwait with a sincere will, a brave stand, and a daring decision that put an end to treacherous belligerence and gave the United States the prestige and respect that qualifies it to lead the world after it became the last superpower on earth.

It seemed clear that during the Brussels summit, the U.S. President was unable to take hold of the necessary reins to make a strategic decision that would reinforce the credibility of the "president of the world" as is being touted in political terminology!! It is no surprise that the U.S. President has become a target of derision for Zhirinovskiy, the leader of Russian fascism, and disdain

for Milosevic, the leader of the Serbs. The former proposed to extend a helping hand to the "weak" United States. The latter responded to the proposal to deal air strikes by intensifying the malicious fire on Sarajevo!?

This American retreat, which is due to tactical calculations and favoring regional interests at the expense of the global responsibilities of the last superpower, is considered submission to tyrants and encouragement for aggression. This will create new facts in the international arena. These facts will contribute to rekindling the fire from beneath the ashes of the cold war!

This disgraceful retreat from the decision to deter the aggressor, coupled with the unfair decision that equates the heavily armed Serb and the Muslim deprived of the right to own a means of self-defense, renders those who abstain from making a deterrent decision partners in an international conspiracy against Bosnia-Herzegovina and partakers in the aggression carried out by the criminals of the barbarian war launched by the Serbs in the name of old crusades and new fascism.

Chief of General Staff Attends Air Base Reopening

LD1701140994 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1255 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 17 Jan—The 'Ali Salim air base was reopened today in a ceremony attended by the Army General Staff Chief Staff Major General 'Ali Muhammad al-Mu'min. The various installations of the base were totally destroyed during the tyrannical Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Receives Message From Clinton

LD1501182994 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1645 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Riyadh, 15 Jan—The Servant of the Two Holy Places, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, has received a letter from His Excellency President Bill Clinton, President of the United States of America. The letter was handed by His Excellency Mr. Ronald Brown, U.S. commerce secretary, who was received at King Fahd's office today. [passage omitted]

Papers Comment on U.S.-Syrian Talks in Geneva

LD1701215394 Riyadh SPA in English 1225 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Riyadh, Jan 17, SPA—The Saudi newspapers commented today editorially on a number of topics. [passage omitted]

On Geneva talks held between the Syrian and U.S. Presidents yesterday, 'UKAZ, which is also published in Jeddah, said the meeting had earned a great importance in the view of the fact that Syrian and the U.S. could play a crucial role in realization of comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East.

The Arab stand is based on the international legitimacy and the resolutions issued by the organization of the United Nations as well as on the principle of land in return of peace, said the paper.

The daily criticized the endeavors of Israel to obtain Arab recognition and establishment of diplomatic and economic relations with the Arab countries before its withdrawal from the Arab territories.

The U.S. in its capacity as the sole big power in the world and the sponsor of the peace process in the Middle East is expected to put pressure on Israel until it withdraws from the Arab territories and recognizes the legitimate Arab rights.

On the same topic Jeddah-based AL-MADINAH said the summit conference of Geneva would enable Washington to activate its role as a mediator.

The daily underscored the importance of U.S. political pressure on Israel so as to pave the way for the settlement of the Arab- Israel dispute.

For its part Riyadh-based AL-JAZIRAH hoped that al-Asad-Clinton talks would pave the way for a real peace in the Middle East.

The Arabs believe that the U.S. is the most qualified country to play an effective and decisive role in the peace process, said the paper.

It is hoped that President al-Asad has successfully conveyed to Clinton the Arab demands for realization of peace, added the daily.

Ad Dammam-based AL-YA'UM deplored the Israeli maneuvers to escape the implementation of the international resolutions.

Through its maneuvers Israel is trying to obtain further Arab concessions, said the daily. It has become very clear that Israel will never positively respond to the peace efforts without effective pressure from a country like the U.S., it added. [passage omitted]

Council of Ministers Hold Weekly Session

LD1701184694 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1618 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 17 Jan (SPA)—The Council of Ministers held its weekly session at al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh this afternoon under the chairmanship of His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd- al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister, minister of defense, and aviation inspector general.

After the meeting, His Excellency Information Minister 'Ali al- Sha'ir, told SPA that the cabinet listened to a summarized report on the most important events in the

past 24 hours in the Arab, Islamic, and international arenas. The cabinet also discussed its constant interest in the progress of efforts aimed at laying down the foundations of peace in the region, and reviewed the current events in Afghanistan and Bosnia-Herzegovina and the continuous efforts made in these two respects.

Minister al-Sha'ir said: In the general context, His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz talked to the cabinet about a number of issues included in the report and focused on the firm and well-known positions adopted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of beloved King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, on the Afghan issue and also on the barbaric Serb attacks on the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. His royal highness also stressed the committed and constructive role played by the custodian of the two holy mosques at this level since events developed in these regions. [passage omitted]

Pakistani President Arrives in Riyadh

LD1601152894 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1349 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 16 Jan SPA—His Excellency President Faruq Ahmad Laghari, the president of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, today arrived in Riyadh on a visit to the Kingdom. He was welcomed at King Khalid international airport by His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the governor of the Riyadh region. [passage omitted]

Fahd Meets Pakistani President

BK1701113694 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] President Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari and the Saudi King, Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, have made a passionate appeal to the Afghan leaders to establish and maintain peace in their country. In a joint appeal during a meeting in Riyadh last night, the two leaders urged the Afghan factions to end the conflict in true of spirit of Islamic teachings.

The two sides held wide-ranging talks covering regional and world issues of mutual interest and bilateral cooperation.

The president flew into Jeddah this morning.

Joint Communique on Afghanistan Issued

LD1701153794 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1430 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] The following joint communique has been issued following the visit of Sardar Faruq Ahmad Leghari, president of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:

King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and His Excellency Sardar Faruq Ahmad Khan Leghari, president of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, have followed with profound anxiety and extreme regret the devleopment of the painful situation in Afghanistan resulting from the Afghan sides resorting to, irrespective of their orientations and affiliation, the factor of violence and brute force in settling the differences Bnd problems between them, which has led to the spilling of innocent blood, killing, and destruction of properties. It is utterly sorrowful, regrettable, and disappointing to see all this taking place following the famous agreement which the Afghan leaders signed in the vicinity of the holy mosque [Mecca] and their undertaking at that time to adhere to what had been agreed upon at the holiest place on earth during the month of blessed Ramadan of last year.

King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, and His Excellency Sardar Faruq Ahmad Khan, while expressing their indignation at what matters in Afghanistan have led to—and in a way that does not please God—appeal to and demand from the Afghan leaders to fear God and arm themselves with wisdom and seek arbitration in the contents of the Holy Qur'an and the pure Sunnah of His Prophet—may God's prayers and peace be upon him—and would like at the same time to stress the necessity of an unconditional ceasefire and the halting of all attacks in all areas of Afghanistan according to the Agreement of Holy Mecca, which stipulates assigning an important role to the Islamic Conference Organization and its secretary general to supervise and follow-up; and to give the secretary general the opportunity to carry out this role and use his good offices to establish peace and security in Afghanistan and to ascertain that all sides genuinely abide by the Islamabad agreement signed by the Afghan leaders in the midst of Holy Mecca on 18th of Ramadan 1413, corresponding to 11 March 1993, and to abide by the stipulations of the recent Jalalabad agreement.

Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Delegation Arrive

LD1501124994 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Excerpt] His excellency the Ethiopian [acting] foreign minister, Mr. Mesfin Seyoum and an accompanying delegation arrived in Riyadh today on a visit to the Kingdom. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Receives Counterpart

LD1501135694 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1225 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 15 Jan (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister, today received at the Foreign Ministry His Excellency Mesfin Seyoum, the [acting] Ethiopian foreign minister and an accompanying delegation.

The two officials discussed ways to develop Saudi-Ethiopian relations on all levels, as well as issues of common concern. [passage omitted]

Defense Minister Receives Counterpart

LD1501152494 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1340 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 15 Jan (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the second deputy prime minister, defense and aviation minister and inspector general, today received his excellency the foreign minister of Ethiopia, Mr. Mesfin Seyoum, who conveyed to his highness a written message from his excellency the prime minister of the transitional government in Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi, to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz. [passage omitted]

Nigerian Foreign Minister Begins Visit

LD1401230294 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2230 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Excerpt] His Excellency Nigerian Foreign Minister Babagana Kingibe arrived in Riyadh tonight. [passage omitted]

Defense Minister Receives Kingibe

LD1501150094 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1337 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 15 Jan (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the second deputy prime minister, defense and aviation minister and inspector general, today received his excellency the foreign minister of Nigeria, Mr. Babagana Kingibe, the special envoy of his excellency the Nigerian president, who conveyed to his highness a written message from his excellency to the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Tension Grows Along North-South Border Area

Charges Traded on 'Massing Troops'

AB1501133694 Paris AFP in English 1316 GMT 15 Jan 94

[By Habib Trabelsi]

[Text] Dubayy, Jan 15 (AFP)—Yemen's rival ruling parties on Saturday traded charges that their respective military forces were massing troops on the borders of the former north and south Yemen, sources close to both sides said.

President Ali Aballah Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) and his Vice President's Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) are accusing each other of massing troops at the old border dividing the country, which was united in 1990.

GPC sources interviewed by telephone from Dubayy, told AFP that the YSP which ruled the former South Yemen had deployed its 20th brigade at the border at dawn on Friday. The brigade, positioned across from the northern province of al-Baydha, had been based further inland in the south.

The GPC sources said the southern forces were bolstered opposite the border town of Ta'izz and that armoured vehicles were sent to the airport of the southern port of Aden.

On Thursday, the sources said that the YSP had redeployed four army units previously on the borders with Oman and Saudi Arabia to the oil region of Shabwa in the south.

Socialist South Yemen and the more prosperous conservative North united in May 1990 after three centuries of separation. But their armies have not yet been merged and the two leaders, Salih and Vice President Ali Salem al-Bid, have been locked in a dispute since August over how to rule the country.

Al-Bid, the president of the former south, left the capital to his home in Aden, demanding political and economic reforms. He refused to attend a reconciliation meeting with Salih last Sunday.

The sources contacted from Dubayy accused al-Bid's party of "recently using the country's oil revenues to conclude arms deals, notably with Bulgaria and Russia." A YSP official however denied the charge and held the rival party responsible for the military "escalation."

"The GPC deployed Friday several units on the old border, mainly the first armoured unit and the Amaliqa brigade, opposite the northern provinces of al-Baydha and Dhamar," the YSP source said.

In a statement Thursday, the GPC slammed the mobilisation and reinforcement of troops by the socialist party, saying it was against "the spirit of national unity and risked a breakout of a civil war."

The GPC sources accused the socialists of lacking interest in implementation of a plan, approved by a military committee headed by the deputy chief of staff, Colonel Ali Mohammad Salah, to withdraw both parties' forces from the old border line.

Jordan had accepted the committee's proposal to send an intervention force to Yemen to supervise the withdrawal, they said, but the YSP asked Amman to postpone the deployment.

Tension has been rising in the country since the failure of last Sunday's reconciliation attempt by religious mediators.

The Yemeni president said Wednesday he was prepared to step down and hand the job over to his southern rival to "safeguard Yemen's unity."

He urged his countrymen to avoid a conflict and organise a peaceful march from the northern town of Ta'izz to Aden, the capital of the former south.

GPC Regrets YSP's 'Fabrications'

JN1701083494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] A responsible source within the General Committee of the General People's Congress [GPC] has stated the following:

We regret the statement issued by the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] Political Bureau in Aden on 15 January 1994. This statement contained false allegations and fabrications against the GPC. We will reply to these fabrications later in detail. However, the serious fabrications about some military moves by some northern governorates in the direction of previously divided regions is what should be explained today.

As usual, the YSP Political Bureau's recent statement reversed facts in a desperate attempt to cover up its mobilization of armed forces in previously divided outskirts. This is because it has nothing to say after the facts became clear to the public at home and abroad.

The YSP should have acted otherwise by withdrawing the troops it had massed at previously divided positions in the governorates of Shabwa, Abyan, and Lahd, instead of accusing others of doing the same thing, despite its certainty and knowledge that these accusations are not true.

The GPC, which is eager to maintain unity and safeguard the security of the people and the homeland, would not even think about moving troops or mobilizing fighters. This is because it feels it has responsibility toward all sons of Yemen throughout the country, and not only in certain governorates to the exclusion of others. It also feels itself responsible for the safety of the entire homeland, and not just certain parts.

The source asserted that the committee formed by the House of Representatives should embark on a fact-finding mission. Also, the military committee should take note of how things are proceeding and also do some fact-finding. Moreover, the expanded national dialogue committee should be aware of what is taking place on the ground.

Salih's Party Claims Air Attack

NC1801115894 Paris AFP in English 1149 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Jan 18 (AFP)—President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's party charged Tuesday that a southern Yemeni warplane bombed a northern army brigade, but the south denied the accusation.

The Russian-made MiG warplane bombed the brigade at al-'Amaliqah in the southern province of Abyan on Monday, causing enormous damage but no casualties, the spokesman for the General People's Congress (GPC) said.

He told AFP that the warplane returned to Badr air base, near the southern port city of Aden.

However, a spokesman at the Badr base denied the charge, insisting the plane was on a routine training mission.

Al-Bid's Boycott of Salih Meeting Said for Security Reasons

JN1601125294 Al-Shariqah AL-SHURUQ in Arabic 13-19 Jan 94 p 6

[Text] Political sources in Yemen think there are two main reasons for Yemeni Vice President al-Bid's boycott of a meeting last Sunday with Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih in al-Janad Mosque in the Yemeni city of Ta'izz, which is surrounded by green hills.

The sources told AL-SHURUQ that al-Bid was not sure about the security measures. In fact, people close to him said openly that al-Bid had great fears that he would be a victim of a carefully concocted assassination attempt. The second reason is that if al-Bid went to Ta'izz, he would find himself in a hostile atmosphere. The reason for this is not President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih but the ulema, who are known for their support for President Salih. Despite all the recent developments, the ulema still regard al-Bid as a socialist and communist.

Whatever the reasons behind al-Bid's boycott of the meeting, the failure of the Ta'izz meeting has exacerbated the Yemeni crisis. President 'Ali Salih acknowledged this when he warned of "serious pitfalls facing Yemeni unity" which was realized on 22 May 1990.

The Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] has made a meeting between the Yemeni president and the vice president conditional on the implementation of the YSP's 18 points, despite the fact that the General People's Congress had earlier approved those 18 points. This means the YSP does not plan to make any concessions and that al-Bid is deliberately seeking to "humiliate" 'Ali Salih to corner him and drive him to adopt positions and measures which al-Bid probably would like to see happen without himself taking the responsibility of declaring or adopting such measures.

Informed Yemeni sources told AL-SHURUQ that the telephone call between al-Bid and King Husayn of Jordan after canceling the Ta'izz meeting has left the door open to hold a meeting, but in a neutral venue outside Yemen and after complying with new conditions set by al-Bid.

Council of Ministers Holds Extraordinary Session

JN1701163794 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] The Council of Ministers held an extraordinary session this morning under First Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Hasan Muhammad Makki. The council discussed an invitation from the speaker of the House of Representatives to the prime minister and the cabinet members to attend a joint discussion between the house and the council on the economic situation and the current circumstances facing the country. The session also discussed the measures taken by the government to implement the government program and the House of Representatives' comments on it on whose basis the government won the house's vote of confidence.

Moreover, the Council of Ministers agreed to respond to the invitation in implementation of a previous decision. It also discussed the recent measures to be taken to implement the final stage of the population census.

The Council stressed the importance of continuing in a positive manner [words indistinct]. The council praised the accomplishments of [words indistinct] this important national action [words indistinct] to achieve all the (?objectives) of economic development and the cultural awakening of our country.

House Meets, Criticizes Government Performance

JN1701165494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] The House of Representatives held a meeting this morning under the chairmanship of House Speaker brother Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar and in the presence of First Deputy Prime Minister brother Dr. Hasan Muhammad Makki and the cabinet members. At the beginning of the meeting, the House of Representatives speaker welcomed the first deputy prime minister and the cabinet members and delivered a valuable speech in which he said: I would like to express my happiness and that of people's deputies to welcome you at the beginning of this meeting in the new year, which we hope will bring prosperity and stability for our people who have suffered much as a result of certain whims and desires and the placement of personal interests over public ones.

Brothers: We in this House hoped that we would be able to go ahead with our legislative and control duties within the framework of the Constitution and the law, backed by everybody's belief in the need to save the country from its difficulties and problems. The problems have accumulated since the hateful eras of division and the ensuing unnatural transitional period that our people decided to end on 27 April 1993. They did this by holding general elections that reflected the honesty of the people and registered a wonderful achievement of cohesion among the individuals of the society who took part in the elections. It also silenced many tongues and refuted many speculations.

House of Representatives speaker brother Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar added: The general elections experience in our country produced a new political fact, which everybody had to respect because the results of these elections represented the will of the whole people for the first time in the history of unified Yemen. But regrettably, some people have changed their intentions, and their words now contradict their actions. This forced the House to face some difficulties in carrying out its constitutional duties. Yet, the House has played its national role in preserving the people's interests and gains, represented by unity, democracy, and political pluralism, and also exerted its utmost effort to support the coalition government to carry out its executive duties since it won the House of Representatives' confidence in accordance with the statement it submitted and in light of the House's comment on it.

It was natural for the coalition government to immediately carry out the contents of its statement. As part of its special duties, the House commented on the statement and drew up timetables for it to be carried out. If we want to review the government's commitments from the day it won confidence on 2 August 1993 through the rest of the year, we will not be able to explain them all. However, we refer to the main duties:

1. Merging the Armed Forces and the Security Forces on national bases.
2. Unifying all legislation and submitting draft laws to the House.
3. Submitting a program for the financial, monetary, and supply policy, in addition to a report on the economic and financial situation of the state.
4. Presenting the draft general state budget for 1994 two months before the beginning of the financial year.
5. Providing the required foreign currency to import basic commodities.

All this was frozen and its execution delayed, whether with goodwill or not, until the political crisis emerged to double the tragedies and paralyze the various state departments. Instead of containing the negative repercussions of the crisis and limiting them by doubling its activity and encouraging more efforts by all the state departments, the government pushed matters in the opposite direction. This prompted the House of Representatives in its meeting on 10 January 1994 to obligate the government to return employees to their offices, including the prime minister and the ministers; to continue the dialogue within the coalition; and to take its time to carry out its duties.

Concluding, House speaker brother Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar said that the House of Representatives, the guiding authority of the government, deeply regrets the deteriorating situation and the negligence the political crisis has produced in various areas, especially the economic area in which prices went up and in which the national currency deteriorated seriously. This prompted the House to summon the government to

quickly discuss its statement and the House's comment on it. We decided to hold discussions on the following areas:

1. The economic and financial area.
2. The security and military area.
3. The services area.
4. the administrative and legal area.

Afterward, brother Dr. Hasan Muhammad Makki, first deputy prime minister, delivered the following speech:

Brother House of Representatives speaker, brother deputies: May God's peace and blessings be upon you. It gives me and the brother ministers pleasure to be with you in response to an invitation which your esteemed House extended on 13 January 1994 and which set Monday, 17 January 1994, as a date for the government's attendance to hold a general debate on the government's policy statement and the House's reply to it in order to learn about the extent and level of implementing this statement.

To begin with I would like to express my deep appreciation for your esteemed House for the effective and constructive role it has played since the crisis began, and also for its full eagerness to contain and stop the repercussions of the crisis in order to safeguard the country's unity and stability. This is so especially since your House is the first parliamentary council to be elected through direct, free, and honest elections, which were held in all Yemeni governorates on 27 April 1993. This House also came as an additional gain for our people who achieved their unity on 22 May 1990 when the Republic of Yemen was declared on a democratic basis. This basis is established on political pluralism. Through this basis, our people and homeland realized this historic achievement.

Brother House Speaker, brother deputies, we, as a coalition government, highly appreciate the important role your esteemed House has played in various legislative, constitutional, and political aspects by devoting most of your recent sessions to discussing the strangling political crisis the country is passing through, and also by trying to heal the rift between the parties to the coalition. Your invitation to the government truly expresses the House's care, under these regrettable circumstances, for the homeland's causes and concerns.

We regret the fact that not all ministers attended this session, and that only two parties in the coalition attended it. We were eager to respond to your invitation to attend this session after the brother House speaker entrusted us with doing so on 16 [as heard] January 1994 despite the absence of a coalition party, including the brother prime minister, who is preoccupied with political action and who left behind a host of major tasks as head of government. This has completely crippled the work of the government and all its departments and facilities. Moreover, difficulties were created that prevented the government from carrying out its role and fulfilling its commitments regarding the implementation of its policy statement, which was submitted to your esteemed House, and your comment on this statement, according to which the government won confidence. In addition, these difficulties impeded the constitutional tasks assigned to the government.

The continued absence of a party to the coalition government has prevented the government from accomplishing its plans and programs. Perhaps the most important matter was the government's inability to submit the 1994 state's general budget draft law on the constitutional date. During the 1993 fiscal year, the government had to work according to the 1992 budget and decided not to work out (?any) development or services projects. Moreover, we could not submit annual reports on the government's achievements.

Brother Speaker, brother Deputies: We in the government wished to submit to your esteemed House the replies to the overall questions and queries that the deputies addressed to the government. However, the absence of the brother prime minister and several ministers has prevented this. Realizing this, some urgent measures and arrangements were taken to handle the economic situation in a way that would stop the continued deterioration in the exchange rate and provide the basic commodities, which would stabilize the homeland through an expanded meeting comprising officials of the finance and supply and trade ministries, the central bank, the commercial banks operating in the country, and the federation of the chambers of commerce and industry.

Concluding his speech, Makki said: We affirm our full readiness to reply to the queries submitted to us. We hope that we will be given another opportunity to prepare thorough reports on the government's various activities and replies to your queries.

Afterward, the deputies unanimously agreed to postpone the general debate on the government's policy statement and the House's comment on it to a coming session, which would be attended by Prime Minister brother Engineer Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas and all ministers.

After the brother first deputy prime minister and ministers left the House's hall, the deputies discussed the issue of voting on Presidential Decree No. 23 of 1992 on the salaries and retirement allowances for the Armed Forces and security forces. The House decided to make a final vote in the coming session. It also decided to hold a special session to discuss its internal affairs and situation. The House will resume work tomorrow, Tuesday, morning, God willing.

Negotiations With Saudis Resume on Border Dispute

NC1801101094 Paris AFP in English 0936 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] Sanaa, Jan 18 (AFP)—Saudi and Yemeni experts have resumed talks to resolve a border dispute, their seventh round over the past year, officials said Tuesday.

The meeting opened in the Yemeni capital late Monday. Originally scheduled for December 20, it was delayed after Yemen said its delegation chief, Ja'far Ba Salih, had health problems.

The Saudi team was led by Mutlab al-Nafissah.

In the previous six rounds, the two sides have made no progress, sticking to issues of procedure.

The border dispute centres on the provinces of Najran, Jizan and Assir, which came under Saudi control under an agreement signed in 1934.

Yemen wants a return of the territories, saying the agreement expired in 1992. It has refused to renew the accord.

President Salih, Iraqi Envoy Discuss Arab Issues

JN1801091294 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman, today received brother Muhsin Khalil, the Iraqi ambassador to our country. During the meeting, discussions dealt with relations between the two fraternal countries and issues and developments of interest to the Arab nation.

During the meeting, the Iraqi ambassador stated that fraternal Iraq is eager to see our country overcome the current situation and challenges. He indicated that Yemeni unity is a source of pride and hope for all Arabs. He said that it is the responsibility of the entire Arab nation to maintain this unity.

The Yemeni News Agency, SABA', has learned that the brother Presidential Council chairman has asked the brother ambassador to convey a message to his brother Iraqi President Saddam Husayn on the fraternal relations and issues and developments of interest to the Arab nation.

Al-Bid Confers With EC Ambassadors in Aden

JN1401150794 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Yesterday evening in Aden, brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, received the EC ambassadors to our country.

They discussed relations between our country and the EC states, and exchanged views on current developments. Brother al-Bid expressed appreciation for the positions of the EC states which support unity, democracy, and modernization in our country. He stressed his eagerness to continue both the national dialogue and the search for peaceful solutions to the issues and difficulties facing the march of national construction away from violence or force in a way that will enhance unity and democracy and consolidate the construction of a modern Yemeni state.

Al-Bid also indicated our country's eagerness to bolster and promote its relations with the EC states in a way that will serve the common interests based on the exchange of benefits between our people and the peoples of these states.

For their part, the EC ambassadors expressed their countries' interest in developments in our country. They also emphasized their support for unity and democracy and eagerness to resolve all differences by peaceful means and through a genuine and responsible dialogue.

Baghdad Radio on Clinton-al-Asad Talks in Geneva

JN1701154794 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] The head of the Syrian regime, Hafiz al-Asad, returned to Damascus last night following the talks he held in Geneva with U.S. President Bill Clinton on the settlement of the Palestine question and bilateral relations.

In another development, U.S. President Bill Clinton last night said that he discussed with the head of the Syrian regime the possibility of dispatching U.S. troops to the Golan Heights in a peace-keeping mission, as he claimed.

In statements to journalists on board the presidential plane that took him back to Washington following a meeting with Hafiz al-Asad in Geneva, Clinton said that al-Asad stressed the need for mutual assurances in the peace process, and that the Syrian president has clearly committed himself, during the talks, to establishing amity with the Zionist entity.

A Zionist source said that Dennis Ross, coordinator of the peace process, last night briefed Zionist Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin on the two presidents' talks in Geneva. The U.S. President also held a telephone conversation with the Zionist prime minister to brief him on the results of his meeting with the head of the Syrian regime. Clinton has also held a telephone conversation with the head of the Egyptian regime, Husni Mubarak, and agreed with him to continue consultations on the settlement process.

Anti-Syria Radio Critical of Clinton-al-Asad Summit

JN1801125894 Baghdad Voice of Arab Syria in Arabic 0755 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Children of our people in the wounded Syria, children of our glorious Arab nation: Was the Geneva summit between al-Asad and Clinton, which lasted for over five hours, a meeting [liqa'] or an encounter [iltiqa']? Is there a difference between a meeting and an encounter? Yes there is. Hafiz al-Asad did not go to meet with Clinton. He went to Geneva to have an encounter. Meeting is between two parties each of which has a specific position and opinion on the issues under discussion. An encounter is between two parties that agree on positions, opinions, and views under discussion or disputed issues.

From the first moment of that encounter, observers noted there was a full agreement in views and positions. If this conclusion is not new to our people in Syria and the Arab world in general, it does at least put an end to what was said in certain Arab and Western capitals to the effect that Hafiz al-Asad has something to say to Bill Clinton. Hired and yellow [signifying anti-Arab] media hinted, or even stated decidedly, that Hafiz al-Asad would propose to Clinton solutions to our problems and issues out of concern for our national and pan-Arab issues, the most important of which is the Arab's central cause, the Palestine question, and withdrawal from the Golan Heights and South Lebanon as stipulated by UN Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

"The peace of the brave" is a term that was uttered repeatedly by Bill Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad, but neither of them said what it means. The "just and comprehensive peace" was also uttered repeatedly by Bill Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad, also without explaining what they mean by it.

Bilateral ties and removing anything obstructing their improvement and progress between al-Asad's regime and the U.S. Administration was Hafiz al-Asad's main concern for the past four years. He did not want to be bypassed by the new world order, the order of hegemony and control which the United States is trying to impose on the world under the current imbalance. Consequently, during that period Hafiz al-Asad did everything to please the U.S. Administration. He even went so far as to send Syrian Armed Forces to stand by the side of the U.S.-Atlantic forces in Hafar al-Batin trenches to launch a flagrant, treacherous aggression against fraternal Iraq.

In Geneva, and from the start, Hafiz al-Asad was nominated a representative and a faithful defender of the U.S. and Zionist interests.

Lockerbie, terrorism, narcotics, and Lebanon are cases with which the U.S. Administration used to threaten Hafiz al-Asad's regime. They will all be closed after Hafiz al-Asad confirmed his good conduct and intentions toward the U.S. and Zionist interests and his constant readiness to be the obedient executer of all that he is asked to do in the forthcoming phase, the phase of normalization and entry into the Zionist age, the age of submission and capitulation and the burning of all false, shining slogans on liberation, progress, development, and defending the pan-Arab interests.

Therefore, what happened in Geneva was not a meeting, but an encounter and a full agreement in views, directions, and conduct. The Geneva summit between Clinton and al-Asad marks a new phase that has its own characters and features. It will certainly be the phase of openness and publicity and the phase of full agreement and harmony between al-Asad's regime, the Zionist enemy, and the U.S. Administration to humiliate our nation, subjugate it, and plunder its wealth. However, Clinton and al-Asad have forgotten that the will of the free peoples cannot be tied to what the agents and the usurper enemies agree upon.

Saddam Attends 'Mammoth' Rally in Salah-al-Din

JN1701183494 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1738 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Jan (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has attended a mammoth mass rally in the Salah-al-Din Governorate, which was held on the third anniversary of the treacherous 30-state aggression against our mujahid country.

The citizens, who were carrying their personal weapons, applauded the president, may God preserve him, expressed their readiness to defend the achievements of the great revolution, and renewed their support for the brave leadership of President Saddam Husayn. Thousands of citizens greeted his excellency and voiced their full loyalty to the beloved one and the people's brave leader.

The masses of the governorate expressed their anger over and denunciation of the cowardly aggressive action against our developing country and the building of a new Iraq.

Muhammad Yunus al-Ahmad, member of the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and official in charge of the party's organizations in the governorates of al-Anbar and Salah-al-Din, and Ghazi Ahmad Khattab, Salah-al-Din governor, attended the mass rally.

Baghdad Protests to Arab League on Airspace 'Violations'

JN1601100594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 16 Jan (INA)—Iraq has again informed the Arab League that the Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers have continued to provide facilities to U.S., British, and French aircraft to violate the Iraqi airspace, noting that this seriously jeopardizes Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity.

In a letter addressed to the Arab League secretary general yesterday, the Iraqi permanent representative to the Arab League said that the aforementioned aircraft continued on 10-13 January to violate the Iraqi airspace, flying from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. They carried out 176 hostile air sorties on the aforementioned dates.

A list attached to the letter detailed these violations.

Protest to UN on U.S. Air Activity

JN1601100494 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0835 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] New York, 16 Jan (INA)—Iraq has again lodged a protest with the United Nations over the U.S. aircraft's continued violation of the Iraqi airspace for purposes of surveillance, harassment, and flare-dropping.

In a letter addressed to the UN secretary general yesterday, the Iraqi permanent representative to the United Nations said that the aforementioned aircraft continued on 1-9 January to violate the Iraqi airspace. They carried out 473 hostile air sorties on the aforementioned dates when they overflew several areas in Iraq. Besides, some squadrons of the U.S. aircraft dropped flares over several areas in the Ninawa Governorate.

The Iraqi permanent representative to the United Nations requested that the letter be circulated among the UN Security Council members, and deemed a UN Security Council document.

Clashes Between State, Resistance Forces Reported

Saddam Forces Ambushed in al-Basrah

NC1401163694 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] After observing and monitoring the movements of Saddam's security forces in al-Basrah Governorate, the Islamic resistance forces last week set up ambushes on the road between the district of (al-Mdaynah) and the area of (al-Nasri) which belong to the Governorate of al-Basrah. Our sources affirmed that the resistance ambushes opened fire when the tyrant's security forces passed the above-mentioned road. They said that a fierce battle ensued between the resistance groups and the regime's security forces. A number of soldiers and officers from the tyrant's security forces were killed and the rest withdrew, dragging their tails behind them. The Islamic resistance forces returned to their bases safely.

Army Corps Attacked in al-'Amarah

NC1501191494 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Retaliating for the regime forces' criminal practices against the inhabitants of the marshlands in southern Iraq, the Islamic resistance forces last week carried out a heroic operation against regime forces and artillery at the IV Army Corps command near the city of al-'Amarah. Our sources said that in its courageous attack, the Islamic resistance used 120mm mortars against the regime's artillery batteries, ammunition, and personnel positions, leaving the regime forces horrified and unable to move. Our sources said the regime suffered heavy human and material losses. Eyewitnesses said they saw columns of flames from far away and heard explosions of ammunition in the storehouses for 48 hours.

After the operation, our sources added, the regime placed all its forces in the south on maximum alert and closed main and secondary roads linking al-'Amarah with the other governorates in the south. The regime forces also launched extensive searches for the heroes of the Islamic resistance, who returned safely to base.

It should be mentioned that large areas of al-'Amarah marshlands were targeted by the regime's large-caliber artillery deployed at the IV Army Corps command near the city of al-'Amarah. The shelling destroyed hundreds of houses, caused heavy property damage, and forced thousands of people to leave their homes in the marshlands and seek refuge in the Islamic Republic of Iran and in other regions inside Iraq.

Kurdish Areas Reportedly Shelled

NC1601162194 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] The Iraqi regime forces on 14 January bombarded the areas on the bank of the (Tirwan) river opposite the town of Klar. The bombardment targeted the areas of (Kani Zarba) Tub 'Askar, Khidri, and (Qalama). There were no losses.

Explosions in Baghdad Reported

NC1701175394 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] A highly placed source has said that an explosion occurred in the Border Guard Corps headquarters, which is adjacent to [words indistinct] building in Baghdad, on 11 January 1994. The source reported that the evacuation of those who were killed or wounded in the blast to the hospitals lasted one and a half hours.

The source added that a military building used by the Special Forces in Baghdad was the target of an attack with automatic weapons on 1 January. Captain Sabri Wahid Duri and three soldiers were killed in the assault.

Commenting on the deteriorating health conditions in Baghdad and the other Iraqi governorates under the regime's control, the source said that AIDS has spread in Baghdad and other cities to the point where hospitals are unable to offer treatment to all the patients or control this disease. In Baghdad 222 AIDS cases have been reported with 23 other cases in al-Basrah, 11 in Karkuk, and 86 in al-Ramadi. Additionally, the Bubonic Plague has spread in al-Basrah, al-'Amarah, and Baghdad with 26 cases of this disease reported by Baghdad hospitals alone.

Saddam Receives Thank-You Cable From Sudan's al-Bashir

JN1801105694 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0957 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Jan (INA)—Leader President Saddam Husayn has received a cable of thanks from his brother Sudanese President Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir in reply to the cable of congratulations his excellency sent to him on the 38th anniversary of Sudan's independence. The cable states:

With happiness and joy, we received your kind congratulations on the 38th anniversary of Sudan's independence. We thank you for your congratulations and take this opportunity to send to you our sincerest wishes of continued good health and happiness, and progress and prosperity to your fraternal people.

Ramadan Receives French Parliamentary Group

JN1501183594 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and vice president, today received a French parliamentary delegation led by Serg Mathew, member of the French Senate and mayor of (Corril of Julie).

During the meeting, Taha Yasin Ramadan reaffirmed that Iraq, under leader President Saddam Husayn, will remain alive, strong, and effective, and that day after day, Iraq is proving to the world that its will is too strong to be weakened by any means of military, economic, or media aggression. He indicated that Iraq's strategic achievements, despite the circumstances of the unjust blockade imposed on Iraq, offer practical pieces of evidence about the Iraqis' resolve and adherence to their stands and principles to break the blockade and abort all links of plotting and aggression.

The head of the French parliamentary delegation expressed great appreciation for leader President Saddam Husayn and his courage. He also voiced great appreciation for the Iraqis' courage, ability to overcome difficulties, and adherence to their principles. He said that his visit to Iraq falls within the framework of strengthening relations with the Iraqi National Assembly. He said that his meetings with Iraqi officials are productive and useful for the future of the Iraqi-French relations.

The meeting was attended by the comrade head of the Foreign Relations Bureau of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party.

Group Promises To Try To Ease Sanctions

NC1601210194 Paris AFP in English 2005 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 16 (AFP)—French lawmakers on Sunday ended talks in Baghdad, promising to work on their return for lifting UN sanctions imposed on Iraq more than three years ago, the delegation said.

European Parliament member and former French army chief-of-staff Jeannou Lacaze told AFP the delegation would strive for a lifting of the embargo slapped on Iraq four days after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

General Lacaze, who described his talks with Iraqi officials as "very positive," said the delegation would "present several proposals reflecting the Iraqi viewpoint," but gave no details on the issues to be raised.

He said his team supported an easing of restrictions, notably on medical products. The delegation had decided to donate five tonnes of powdered milk to Iraqi infants, he added.

The French delegation, which leaves Monday for Amman, met Sunday with Prime Minister Ahmad Husayn Khudayyir and parliamentary speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih.

A French official said Friday the visit was "a personal initiative and that it does not commit the French authorities" or represent a change in policy towards Iraq.

He added that France was still for Iraq's implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions on disarmament.

Franco-Iraqi ties were severed at Baghdad's initiative during the Gulf crisis to protest France's participation in the international coalition that ousted Iraq from Kuwait after seven months of occupation.

Iraqi newspapers reported Friday that Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz had discussed the possibility of restoring diplomatic ties between Baghdad and Paris with the lawmakers.

The delegation, which arrived Thursday, was led by Senator Serge Mathieu, head of the Franco-Iraqi Friendship Association.

It also held talks with Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf.

PUK's Talabani Returns From Visit to Syria

NC2401165494 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], returned to the homeland at 1200 yesterday following a 25-day official visit to Syria.

Leadership Comments on Clinton-al-Asad Summit

Rabin's Bureau Reacts

TA1601173794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] The prime minister's bureau says that at this point Israel sees no sense in reacting to the remarks made at the news conference by Presidents Clinton and al-Asad, because a U.S. team is due in Israel, perhaps tonight, to report on the meeting. The bureau notes that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin thanks President Clinton for his contribution to the promotion of the peace process.

Minister Shulamit Aloni says a summit meeting should be planned soon between the Syrian president and Prime Minister Rabin.

Minister Yosi Sarid is encouraged by the results of the meeting in Geneva, and says that Clinton's remarks about al-Asad's willingness to establish normal relations with Israel are very important and commit the Syrian president.

Tzomet says that Prime Minister Rabin has scored a failure in the management of the peace process, and has now given President Clinton the power to make decisions.

Demonstrations against the Geneva summit have begun in various locations in the north. Residents of kibbutzim in the Bet She'an Valley are holding a demonstration at the 'En Hanaziv junction under the slogan: Clinton and al-Asad Will Not Determine the Future of the Golan. Another demonstration was held at the Tzemah junction, and some 200 people are demonstrating in Qiryat Shemona. Our correspondent Yo'av Aviv reports that the Israel Police have reinforced their deployment in anticipation of the reaction of the inhabitants of the north.

Rabin Comments on News Conference

TA1601182594 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin outside the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem on 16 January—recorded]

[Text] [Rabin] I would not like to draw conclusions merely on the basis of a news conference.

[Sukenik] But President Clinton himself said that President al-Asad spoke about normalization with Israel.

[Rabin] But it was Clinton who said that, I have to hear it also from al-Asad.

[Sukenik] The new factor is that normalization was mentioned for the first time in the Syrian context.

[Rabin] Normalization has been referred to by the Syrians in the past. The problem is how it fits into the concept of peace, what the timetable to achieve peace is, and what price Israel has to pay.

Peres: 'We Still Have a Lot to Learn'

TA1601180594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1720 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres at the Jerusalem Ramada Hotel by Shlomo Raz on 16 January—recorded "a short time ago"]

[Text] [Peres] What we can learn from the Geneva news conference is that we still have a lot to learn. In other words, we still do not have all the details, which we will receive from the U.S. peace team. The overall terminology was okay, the detailed terminology has still not been uttered. It is still too early to draw conclusions. It is clear that President Clinton made a supreme effort to advance the peace process, for which we admire him. We are ready to resume the peace talks between the heads of delegations at the end of the month as planned, but to what extent the general terminology is translated into practice, we will know—at the earliest—tomorrow, and even that is not definite.

[Raz] But can we refer to satisfaction, temperate satisfaction, or disappointment that President al-Asad did not go into more detail on normalization?

[Peres] The tone was too positive to be disappointing, it was too general to arouse satisfaction. At this stage, we know some of the things—we know the overall tone—we do not know the details, and there is no point in guessing.

[Raz] In your meeting tomorrow with the two U.S. emissaries—Dennis Ross and Martin Indyk—will you have to provide the Americans with answers concerning the news conference?

[Peres] Our answers are ready today. We say that in return for full peace, including diplomatic relations, open borders—not only normalization because that is a general word, we have to know what lies behind normal relations—discussions on security arrangements, an understanding on Lebanon, and the proper conduct of the negotiations, our answer is affirmative.

Further on Peres Remarks

TA1701113494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Report by Jack Katzenell—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Katzenell] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said Israel would have to analyze very carefully all the information which he had just received from the head of the U.S. peace team, Dennis Ross, about the Clinton-al-Asad summit. Peres made it clear that not all his doubts about al-Asad's intentions had been dispelled, and Israel would have to investigate the significance of al-Asad's public statements in direct negotiations with Syria. Nevertheless, Peres agreed with Ross and with

President Clinton that there are grounds for encouragement in al-Asad's statement.

[Peres] Basically, we are very glad that the negotiations with the Syrians will be renewed on the level of the head of the missions by the end of the month, and that there is a feeling of a more promising air that was created in the meeting between the President of the United States and the president of Syria. [passage omitted]

Beilin: 'We Are Still Far From Clarity'

TA1601172294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1646 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin by Mikha'el Tuchfeld—live]

[Text] [Tuchfeld] Mr. Beilin, do the pronouncements heard at the joint news conference by Presidents Clinton and al-Asad, in which the latter spoke about normal relations, meet Israel's expectations?

[Beilin] I think we must wait for a detailed report about the lengthy meeting held by the two men which we are due to get either tonight or tomorrow morning. The pronouncements made at the news conference were important, but they are not what we would like to hear from President al-Asad himself. Had the latter said what President Clinton said we would definitely feel more comfortable. It is important to ascertain whether President al-Asad's is fully committed. The commitment in principle to arrive at a comprehensive peace and to work toward normalization are important, and I would not want to play them down in any way. The feeling would seem to be that we have taken a step forward, although we are still far from clarity.

[Tuchfeld] Does the fact that the two presidents issued separate statements rather than a joint one strengthen what you say; namely, that we heard the pronouncements from Clinton rather than from al-Asad?

[Beilin] Maybe. I do not know whether they had planned to come out with a joint statement, but the fact remains that they issued separate statements. Of course, both statements contained positive elements. Some things, which cannot be dismissed out of hand, were left unsaid. However, as I said before, we should wait for a full report and regard this news conference as an element of progress in a long process which may now be shortened.

[Tuchfeld] Is the opening of a U.S.-Syrian channel of communications good or detrimental for Israel?

[Beilin] It is not detrimental for Israel. I think it is part of an overall structure containing a three-way and a two-way dialogue between us and the Syrians and between the Syrians and the Americans. I see it as part of overall progress, and not as something having an adverse effect on us.

[Tuchfeld] But we did not hear even one word on the question of terror. Syria is considered a terror-supporting country, but we heard no mention of the subject in the news conference.

[Beilin] I suppose many things were said behind closed doors and were not repeated at the news conference. We must wait a few more hours to better understand what happened in the closed rooms.

[Tuchfeld] Finally, I cannot help asking you about Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's criticism today. He said your remarks last week about the future of the Golan and that settlements should not have been established there were thoughtless.

[Beilin] Perhaps you cannot help asking me, but I am entitled not to answer you.

[Tuchfeld] Mr. Beilin, thank you very much.

Sarid: Al-Asad's Remarks 'Encouraging'

TA1601170194 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1605 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Environment Minister Yosi Sarid by Ya'el Dan, Itay Engel, and Udi Segal—live]

[Text] [Dan] We have the first reaction by a cabinet minister to Syrian President al-Asad's remarks. You heard what President al-Asad had to say at the Geneva news conference. Are you satisfied or disappointed?

[Sarid] First, I think we have to wait to hear more about what took place at the Clinton-al-Asad summit meeting. What we know so far is what is public knowledge. We all know that President Clinton's emissaries—Dennis Ross and his colleagues—will arrive in Jerusalem tonight. We will receive details from them, and sometimes the details are more important than what we hear at a news conference. On the other hand, the initial reports or signals we received from the news conference are encouraging. I think we heard things we have never heard before: First, we heard a Syrian readiness for full peace with Israel, and even more important—according to the U.S. President's testimony—al-Asad has made a commitment to normalize relations with Israel. I think that is something we very much wanted to hear, and now we have heard it.

[Dan] Did we hear al-Asad's definition of the substance of peace, as we have been waiting to hear?

[Sarid] Full peace is a good term. Of course, when full peace is mentioned we still have to see what it means. I assume that in a meeting between two presidents lasting three or four hours they did not make do with such a general term. I believe that underlines even more what I said previously, that we have to hear the details of the meeting and then analyze them. I believe that based on what we heard from the Syrian president, and even more so from the U.S. President, it is obvious that it was not a disappointing meeting. Quite the contrary. I have already mentioned full peace and a commitment to

normalization of relations with Israel. There is one sentence, which to me appears very important: Syria regards full peace a strategic option. From that we learn that it is not merely a Syrian tactical move. We must compare that to the situation which existed only two or three years ago. At that time, when Syria referred to strategic considerations, it referred to strategic parity with Israel, which meant another confrontation with Israel. Now the strategic aim is peace. I believe that when we study the two concepts we are witness to the huge distance we have covered in the last two to three years in the geopolitical and geostrategic situation in the Middle East.

[Engel] You therefore sound optimistic after hearing what was said in Geneva.

[Sarid] I am definitely optimistic.

[Segal] Minister Sarid, what does that mean for Israel? The ball is now in your court, you will have to make the difficult decisions.

[Sarid] The ball has still not crossed into anybody's court. It is in both the Syrian and Israeli courts. I definitely agree with President Clinton's term that both sides will have to make tough decisions. I called those decisions the most important and difficult decisions any Israeli Government has made since the establishment of the state. I believe that the decisions facing the Syrian regime are no less tough. If we want peace, then both sides will have to make those decisions soon.

[Dan] Let us put it all in a very concrete context. When the Israeli and Syrian delegations meet in Washington next week will they begin from a better starting point?

[Sarid] I believe so. Since we heard the remarks from the horse's mouth, then I assume that the envoys will act accordingly.

Netanyahu Reacts to Geneva Summit

TA1601202794 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Interview with Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu by Hayim Yavin—live in the studio]

[Excerpts] [Yavin] What is your reaction to the summit meeting between Clinton and al-Asad?

[Netanyahu] We all want to attain real peace with Syria, a peace that contains security, and we started this process in Madrid. However, beyond the words that were said by al-Asad today, I must point to those that were not said. Assuming that those words are squeezed out of him in the next meeting, just as the words normalization and peace were squeezed out of 'Arafat, the question is what kind of peace it will be. What I know is that the prime minister visited the Golan Heights 12 hours before the elections, and said there must be no withdrawal from the Golan. He said that anybody withdrawing from the Golan would be abandoning security. I know, and I believe most Israelis know, that the intention of this government is to give the entire Golan Heights to al-Asad, to step down from the Golan Heights. That will not bring peace.

All that remains to be seen now is not what Israel will give, since that as already been said: The depth of withdrawal will be tantamount to the depth of peace. If peace is interpreted as a mere piece of paper that Hafiz al-Asad has to give us, a peace agreement with two embassies and temporarily open borders—the next day he may close them again and tear the paper to pieces, as has happened so many times among Arabs. Therefore, it is as simple as this: There can be peace only if we stay on the Golan. Peace without the Golan will not be peace. I am telling you: We will oppose it most vigorously and, I believe, with the full support of most Israelis. [passage omitted]

[Yavin] Sir, what do you propose to tell the U.S. envoys, President Clinton, and Secretary Christopher when they tell us: Al- Asad has taken a step forward. What would be your contribution?

[Netanyahu] I would tell them plain and simple: Syria attacked Israel from the Golan Heights, and the aggressor has no right whatsoever to demand back the area from which it attacked us. I would tell Hafiz al-Asad: You demand the entire Golan? I, too, demand the entire Golan.

I would tell the Americans: Al-Asad wants other things. First of all, he wants peace with you, not with us, and he definitely wants the Golan back. He needs this peace to modernize his army, which has Soviet weapons and no spare parts; he wants money and technology; he wants to solve his water problems because of the dam the Turks have built on the Euphrates.

If he wants all these things, I would make our position regarding the Golan more rigid. However, this government is apparently incapable of doing that and does not know how to negotiate.

A peace whereby we withdraw from the Golan in exchange for a piece of paper and embassies is no peace. During the seven-year war in which 1 million people were killed, Iran and Iraq held embassies in each other's country.

Therefore, our demand is simple: If the government and the prime minister who declared that he would not withdraw from the Golan wants to renege on his promise to the voter, I demand that he go back to the voter now and call new elections, before he concocts the details with Clinton and al-Asad.

[Yavin] Mr. Netanyahu, thank you very much.

Press Reports Reactions to Summit

TA1701123594

[Editorial Report] On 17 January, several Israeli Hebrew dailies carry additional reactions to the Geneva summit by members of the coalition, the opposition, and the Golan settlers.

A pool report on page 2 of Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT cites several members of the coalition. Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer says: "Al-Asad spoke about peace of the brave, but did not speak of security, settlements, or withdrawal. He bypassed all the road mines. I am very pleased, though I am missing a few answers." Knesset Member [MK] Avraham Poraz (Meretz) says: "We must not accept full withdrawal from the Golan, not even for full peace with Syria. Sovereignty may be handed over to Syria, but Israel has the right to protect its settlements." Minister Shim'on Shetrit is cited as saying: "The many expectations we had pinned on the Clinton-al-Asad meeting were not met, but the process made progress."

A report by Pe'erli Shahar on pages 1 and 8 of Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR says that "Minister Ya'ir Tzaban yesterday said in response that his impression of the Geneva summit is that a real chance has been opened for a breakthrough that could change the entire Middle East. 'It is reasonable to assume that the prime minister's formula, according to which the depth of withdrawal will equal the depth of peace, will soon stand the real test. Israel has a single supreme interest: That in the future, the Golan Heights never serve as a springboard for acts of aggression against Israel in general and the Galilee in particular. There is room for far reaching compromises on all the other issues.'"

A Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ page A4 report by Gid'on Alon and Yerah Tal carries reactions by opposition members. Likud MK David Levi, former foreign minister, stated "Israel has maneuvered itself into a position in which the United States now coordinates its moves with Syria." According to him, this is a renewed recognition of Syria without it stopping its support for terrorists. Levi further says that "the coordination between the United States and Syria is not healthy for Israel." He adds: "Now, it will be almost impossible to prevent a U.S.-Syrian understanding about Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights."

MK Moshe Qatzav, Likud Knesset faction chairman, says that President Clinton has turned al-Asad into "a key figure for making a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. According to him, from now on, Syria will have a right to veto peace arrangements with other Arab countries, without a single Syrian concession toward peace."

The HA'ARETZ report also carries a reaction by the National Religious Party which says that "the government has created a situation in which foreign presidents determine the future of the state." Moledet Movement Chairman Rehav'am Ze'evi is cited as saying that "we do not need the ruler from across the ocean to manage our peace process." He adds that all al-Asad wants is to receive the Golan Heights back, and hopes that the government would sober up before we encounter hardships.

A report by Shim'on Weiss and ITIM on page 2 of Tel Aviv DAVAR says that "Golan settlers reacted with satisfaction to what they termed 'al-Asad's tough statements in Geneva.'" A statement they issued after the summit says: "Al-Asad's uncompromising statements shattered the illusion that an Israeli willingness to make concessions on the Golan will cause a moderation of the Syrian stands." The Golan settlers call on the government to adopt a policy which represents the "broad consensus among the Israeli public—a policy of peace with the Golan."

Ross, U.S. Team Brief Leaders on Geneva Summit

'Degree of Urgency' on al-Asad's Part Noted

TA1701111594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Report by political correspondent Shlomo Raz from the Prime Minister's Office—live]

[Excerpts] The prime minister, the chief of staff, his deputy, the coordinator of government activities in the territories, and other senior defense officials, are meeting with the U.S. team led by Dennis Ross. The details of withdrawal will be addressed in Washington next week, when the parties start discussing the fine print. [passage omitted]

According to his meeting with al-Asad, President Clinton attributes much importance to holding the peace process in public—because Israel's political structure is democratic. Clinton and the Americans believe it is important that the process is not held in back rooms, except of course for tactical issues and fine print matters. They want a public Syrian commitment to the peace process. They believe that yesterday, al-Asad made a giant step forward in this respect.

Bilateral U.S.-Syrian issues were also broached by the two ministers yesterday. The most difficult of those issues is terror. President Clinton brought up the issue, and noted the fact that the rejectionist front organizations are located in Damascus. He heard al-Asad saying something like: What can I do about George Habash? I cannot dispel him.

Israeli officials discerned a degree of urgency by the Syrian president, conveyed by the U.S. team. Al-Asad feels there is not much time and that peace should be completed before the end of 1994. These are the main points the Americans brought from the meeting President Clinton held with President al-Asad in Geneva. [passage omitted]

This morning, Shim'on Peres, Yosi Beilin, Uri Savir, and other senior Foreign Ministry officials met with the U.S. peace team, headed by Dennis Ross. Their message was not startling: The delegation heads will meet next week. Let us hear Foreign Minister Peres:

[Begin recording] [Peres] Concerning the negotiations, we have concrete results: The heads of the two delegations will meet on 24 January. Negotiations with Syria will resume.

[Raz] After what you heard this morning, are you satisfied with al-Asad remarks?

[Peres] I still believe that the details and the meanings will have to be clarified in the negotiations. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Ross, Rabin Hold Tete-a-Tete Session

TA1701140294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] The meeting with the U.S. peace team ended at noon at the prime minister's bureau, and was followed by a tete-a-tete session between Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Dennis Ross, head of the U.S. team. The earlier meeting was attended by the chief of staff, his deputy, and the Army chief of intelligence, as well as Elyaqim Rubinstein, Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich, and Uri Lubrani, the heads of the delegation to the negotiations in Washington.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the Israeli participants posed numerous questions to the U.S. team about the Americans' interpretation of President al-Asad's remarks in his talks with President Clinton. The Americans are convinced that Syria is indeed prepared to reach full peace and normalization with Israel. The Israelis also asked for clarifications of the substance and price of peace and about the security arrangements with Syria.

Baraq, Ross Discuss Withdrawal Possibility

TA1701194694 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Announcer-read introduction followed by correspondent reports]

[Excerpts] We now move on to the reports U.S. envoy Dennis Ross brought to Jerusalem after the Clinton-al-Asad summit meeting. Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq met with Ross this evening and discussed the possibility of an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal from the Golan Heights, including the possibility of a withdrawal in stages and the leasing of land. In the meantime, it has been learned that President al-Asad hinted to the U.S. President that he would not insist on mutual demilitarization. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen updates us:

The Americans know how to do things dramatically. The U.S. peace team arrived last night from Geneva and went straight to the prime minister's residence. The briefings continued this morning, first at the Foreign Ministry, and then again at the prime minister's bureau. Dennis Ross is reporting to Israel about a different al-Asad, one who promises personal assistance in gathering information on the MIA's and Ron Arad, and who says openly: I do not believe the Israelis, but I also understand when they do not believe me.

Four main points surfaced in Ross' report: Al-Asad is ready to enter into serious negotiations even before a Rabin declaration on a withdrawal from the Golan Heights. It has always been said that al-Asad is in no hurry, but he now believes that time is not in his favor and wants peace. Al-Asad is ready for full peace and normalization, but he will not say so publicly until Rabin says he will withdraw. Security issues were deliberately not discussed in Geneva, they are being left for the negotiations in Washington. Jerusalem says that Rabin is under pressure, since the American are expecting quick answers. The immediate solution is to keep low, something Shim'on Peres supports, but Yosi Beilin does not.

[Begin recording] [Peres] I still think that the details and the significance must be verified in negotiations.

[Beilin] I think that we are now in a different situation than we were in yesterday or the day before. It is some sort of new era in relations between Syria and us. There is no doubt that based on the U.S. reports, there is now a Syrian commitment on a level that did not exist in the past to make peace with Israel. [end recording]

Whichever way we look at it, the Golan Heights are on the negotiating table. [passage omitted]

Is the government serious about holding a referendum on the Golan Heights? Minister Hayim Ramon announced that the cabinet will vote against the National Religious Party's Knesset motion on Wednesday to make it mandatory to hold a referendum on the area's future.

Despite Deputy Minister Mordekhay Gur's remarks about a referendum, ministers believe that the prime minister will prefer early elections prior to an accord with Syria.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 17 January reports: "Cabinet ministers made it clear that Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur read out the announcement on a referendum from the Knesset podium using the exact words decided on at the prime minister's bureau this morning. The ministers told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that the announcement on a referendum was presented to the Knesset after consultations were held at the prime minister's bureau and the final wording had been approved by the prime minister. Minister Yosi Sarid earlier said that the Knesset announcement on a referendum did not have cabinet approval."]

Our party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel reports on the political map prior to a possible agreement with Syria:

Yitzhaq Rabin did not come to the Knesset tonight to talk about the Golan Heights. Cabinet ministers say that the government can only lose by holding a referendum. Even if the government wins the referendum, the cabinet will continue to be based on the same tiny majority in the Knesset. [passage omitted]

How will the political parties respond to an agreement which includes a withdrawal? The right wing will definitely be opposed, but the Likud was taken by surprise when three of its Knesset members abstained in the vote recognizing the PLO. The position of United Torah Jewry, which voted for the Camp David accords and against the PLO agreement, is unknown. Most of the SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] faction is opposed to withdrawal, but as usual it will decide at the last minute.

Announcement of Golan 'Referendum' Draws Response

Gur: Referendum if Peace Price Significant

TA1701155694 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Addressing a Knesset plenum during a debate about the future of the Golan Heights, Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur said a short time ago that if the territorial price demanded from Israel on the Golan in exchange for peace is significant, the government will put the matter to a referendum.

[Begin Gur recording] At this stage, I would like to make clear that in the event the territorial price demanded from us on the Golan Heights is significant, the government will put the issue to a referendum. [end recording]

Replying to a question, Deputy Minister Gur said this position enjoys the approval of the prime minister and the entire government.

Rabin: Finalization of Agreement First

TA1801120694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin was today asked for clarifications about Deputy Defense Minister Gur's announcement, made on behalf of Rabin, regarding a referendum on the Golan Heights issue. Our correspondent Arye Schorr reports:

[Begin recording] [Schorr] The prime minister was asked today for his opinion regarding reservations expressed by Labor figures regarding a referendum and their preference for elections after an agreement with Syria is finalized. Mr. Rabin explained at length his decision—taken following consultations with several of the ministers—namely that if a peace agreement with Syria calls for a significant withdrawal, he will opt for a referendum. Mr. Rabin said that a significant withdrawal could involve the removal of settlements, and on this issue he would like to hear what the public has to say:

[Rabin] I am convinced that if and when we reach a draft peace agreement between Syria and Israel—and this will demand a painful price from us, perhaps even more painful than the Israeli public expects—if and when this happens, and if we want to be completely honest....

[Schorr, interrupting] Rabin went on to say that we must ask the public whether it is willing to pay the price. The prime minister, answering a question, said that at this point—and the emphasis was on this point—there is no need for a proper government decision on the issue of referendum. He emphasized that there is no need to adopt new decisions. It is too early to draft a law in this issue in the Knesset:

[Rabin] I believe that there will be a government majority for this. In any case we will need to draft a law in the Knesset, but there is no point in doing so now, because at this stage we have nothing concrete to submit to the public. We will do so when and if there is something to present to the public.

On the Palestinian track we are not dealing with a territorial concession; there is no danger for uprooting settlements there. The government has received a clear and unequivocal mandate in this sphere. We expressed a willingness for territorial compromise on the Golan Heights, but nothing beyond this.

[Schorr] Today Rabin gave his first public reaction to the position adopted by al-Asad in the Geneva summit. He said this is not the time to hand out compliments:

[Rabin] I am not going to hand out grades to anybody. Although I expected more, for the purposes of continuing the negotiations I am willing to settle for what was publicly said and with what we were briefed on, although not publicly said.

[Schorr] Mr. Rabin hinted that there are elements in al-Asad's position which were not expressed in his speech, but about which the Americans briefed Israel. This is the next issue on the public and media agenda: What was really said in the private meeting between Clinton and al-Asad. [end recording]

To sum up: At this stage there is nothing to submit to the public for a referendum, because we have still not reached the stage of territorial concessions and uprooting settlements. This was what the prime minister said today at Jerusalem's King David Hotel.

Peres: No Need Yet for Decision

TA1801091094 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 18 Jan 94 pp A1, A10

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin decided to announce his proposal to hold a referendum on a withdrawal from the Golan Heights following consultations he held in his office yesterday at the end of his session with the U.S. peace team. Prior to issuing the announcement, Rabin conferred separately with Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

Peres believes the government should retain both options: holding a referendum or calling an election once an agreement has been reached. In his opinion, no decision is called for at this point, but the appropriate option should be chosen at the right time.

The prime minister does not plan to submit the proposal to the cabinet for approval any time soon, and will only do so when the time comes to make a decision. [passage omitted]

Sarid: No Decision Prior To Golan Withdrawal

TA1701175794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Minister Yosi Sarid said in response to remarks by Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur that there is no government position that asserts that a referendum has to be held prior to an actual withdrawal on the Golan Heights. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that according to Minister Sarid's announcement, the issue has never come up in the cabinet and no decision has ever been made. Minister Sarid said it would be appropriate for elections to be held after an accord with Syria is initialed. He believes that the government can win a solid majority in these elections since the peace and security package which will be presented to the public will be most convincing.

Deputy Minister Gur said that the government would call for a referendum if called to make important concessions on the Golan Heights. In a Knesset debate on the future of the plateau, Deputy Minister Gur said that his remarks have the approval of the prime minister and the entire cabinet. He also said that Israel learned after the Clinton-al-Asad summit meeting that Syria insists on receiving the entire Golan Heights in return for peace. He noted that in the negotiations with Syria, we will insist on all the security components based on our concepts.

The Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs opposes the motion by Likud Knesset Member Zakhi Hanegbi to hold elections prior to the signing of a peace accord which includes giving up any territory or which mentions the setting up of a Palestinian self- government in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the ministerial committee opposes the motion on the grounds that it refers to a clear-cut political issue.

Senior Labor Figures Express Opposition

TA1801055794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] Labor Secretary General Nisim Zvili opposes a referendum on the Golan Heights. Mr. Zvili told our party affairs correspondent Shmu'el Tal that it makes no sense for the Labor Party to stop the political process in order to hold a referendum. According to Zvili no discussion on this issue has been held in Labor, and no decision on this issue was adopted by the party or government. The only basis for holding such a referendum is the coalition agreement with SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim].

Ministers Hayim Ramon and Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer also expressed reservations about the idea. Minister Ramon said that elections are preferable. Minister Ben-Eli'ezer says a referendum opens the door for a new system which could undermine democracy. According to Ben- Eli'ezer the government was elected for a period of four years after declaring its intentions. There is no need for a referendum, because the public might react emotionally rather than logically.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the Likud, Meretz, Tzomet, and Darawshah's Arab Democratic Party announced they oppose a referendum on the Golan Heights. Our correspondent notes that a Knesset decision is required for holding a referendum, and so far it looks as though such a decision is not assured of a majority.

Commentary Views 'Rabin's Initiative'

TA1801100394 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 18 Jan 94 p 1

[Commentary by Moti Bassok: "A Shot Aimed at Three Directions"]

[Text] Just when the U.S. peace delegation in Israel was trying to convince the top security echelon and the general public that the new al-Asad is interested in real peace, the prime minister yesterday surprised the political establishment with his suggestion to hold a referendum.

Rabin's initiative is directed at three targets: Hafiz al-Asad, the United States, and Israeli public opinion. The message to al-Asad is simple: We heard from the Americans that you are under pressure and would like to achieve peace this year. If this is so, you had better moderate your demands, otherwise we will have to appeal to Israeli public opinion, which would lengthen the process. The Americans told us you are familiar with the Israeli political scene. You are certainly aware of the massive opposition among the Israeli public to any concession on the Golan Heights, and certainly to the total concession you are demanding.

The message to the U.S. president and secretary of state is unequivocal: The Sinai withdrawal precedent, UN

Resolutions 242 and 338, and mainly the tough Syrian position, could force Israel to concede the entire Golan Heights contrary to vital security interests. This is a difficult, exceptional, sensitive, and complicated issue. Such an issue obliges every prime minister in any democracy to seek the public's opinion. The public could give Syria a negative answer. If you—like us—fear such an answer, you can make good use of your direct channel to al-Asad.

Rabin's message to the Israeli public is this: I understand you and will try to get the best deal for you. Let me work quietly; stop demonstrating. I got your message. We will try to get the best possible peace agreement, but eventually we will leave the decision in your hands.

Protests Held in Support of Golan Settlers

TA1601192494 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Protest vigils are being held this evening at dozens of junctions throughout the country under the slogan: The people are united on the Golan. Our correspondent Nitzan Hen reports that several dozen settlers demonstrated this afternoon opposite the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, calling on the U.S. Administration to stop pressuring Israel. The demonstrators drove in a slow motorcade on Hayarqon Street, and chanted slogans denouncing Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin's remarks that the settlers may live under Syrian rule in the framework of a peace agreement. We will never agree to live under foreign sovereignty, the settlers said, calling on Rabin to fire Beilin at once.

Another protest was held outside Rabin's residence in Jerusalem. Students demonstrated against a withdrawal from the Golan, demanding that the government call an election before making any territorial concession on the Golan.

There is nothing new in al-Asad's remarks—this was the reaction of the Golan settlers to the announcements by Clinton and al-Asad in Geneva. The settlers staged demonstrations today and blocked the main road to the Golan Heights. [passage omitted]

Dozens of kibbutz members in the Jordan Valley held a demonstration at the Tzemah junction, one of 60 demonstrations taking place tonight at junctions throughout the country in support of the Golan settlers. [passage omitted]

Data Reported on Poll of Golan Inhabitants

TA1501093894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0805 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] A lot of impressive work has been invested in the campaign to show that the national consensus supports the Golan Heights as an inseparable part of Israel. However, beyond the car stickers saying: "The people are united on the Golan," what do the residents of the plateau think about their future? The poll we held among the settlers was conducted by Haifa University's Statistics Department under the scientific supervision of Dr. Avner Halevi, an internationally renowned expert. Our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling sums up the poll's results:

Question: Do you think we can reach with the Syrians an agreement which contains less than a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights? Fifty-one percent of Golan residents do not believe we can.

Question: Do you think that within five years there will be a peace accord which includes a withdrawal? Fifty-five percent believe that within five years there will be such an agreement which includes some withdrawal. Twenty-four percent do not believe there will be such an agreement.

Question: Would you be prepared to live on the Golan Heights under Syrian sovereignty? Seven-and-a-half percent are ready to live on the Golan Heights under Syrian sovereignty, 85.5 percent are not prepared to do so, although even among them there are those who believe that there will be a withdrawal in the long run.

Question: Did you discuss the option of leaving the Golan with your family circle? Fifty-two percent did discuss the option with their family and that includes religious inhabitants, kibbutz members, and people living in the town of Qatzrin. Among these people, 11 percent have already made a move in that direction, such as looking for other jobs and alternative housing, and the possibility of receiving financial compensation.

Question: Would you be prepared to leave the Golan Heights now in return for adequate compensation? Some 12 percent are prepared to leave now in return for appropriate compensation. An interesting point is that all those who responded positively on that came from kibbutzim or live in Qatzrin. Not a single resident of the moshavim are ready to leave in return for compensation.

Question: What compensation do you think appropriate? Among those ready to evacuate, some 35 percent mentioned between $100,000 and $300,000. Some 60 percent are not prepared to quote the amount they would accept.

The next question is general: Do you support the peace process with the PLO on an autonomy for Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip? Golan residents are equally divided between supporters and opponents of the agreement with the PLO: 46.3 percent both for and against. Compared to previous polls, it appears that for the majority there is no obvious link between their views on the Golan Heights and their positions on the Palestinian autonomy. They support the autonomy in other areas, but oppose leaving the Golan Heights.

The last question: How did you vote in the last elections and would you vote the same way today? Fifty percent of Labor voters would vote the same way again, 27 percent would not vote Labor, and the others are undecided.

Among those who voted for right-wing parties—Likud, Tzomet, the National Religious Party—60 to 70 percent would vote for them again. Among Meretz voters, 30 percent said openly that they would not vote for it again, 40 percent would recast their vote for it, and 30 percent are undecided.

The telephone poll was conducted among 250 households on the Golan Heights based on a representative sample.

Poll Shows Support for Palestinian State

TA1801150994 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 18 Jan 94 p 19

[Report by Nehama Doweq]

[Text] A majority of the Israeli public supports the establishment of a Palestinian state with clear and agreed-upon borders. Among Labor voters, there is a majority for abandoning settlements in Judaea and Samaria in return for a peace agreement. These two facts emerge from a public opinion poll by the research institute of Hanokh and Rafi Smith conducted for Labor.

The poll results show that 47 percent of the Israeli public support the establishment of a Palestinian state, while 40 percent oppose this and 13 percent abstain. Among Likud supporters, 38 percent favor of the idea, and 54 percent oppose it.

Distribution of stands among Labor supporters is as follows: 67 percent are for the establishment of a Palestinian state; and 23 percent are against. After studying the data, the researchers conclude that Likud supporters will agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state, provided it has agreed-upon and clear borders.

The poll reveals a surprising fact regarding the readiness to leave settlements under foreign sovereignty in Judaea and Samaria—there is only a 6-percent gap between the stands: 40 percent accept this, while 46 percent oppose. In this case too, there is a different distribution of stands between Labor and Likud supporters: 65 percent of the Likud supporters oppose the idea, while 70 percent of the Labor voters are willing to accept it.

The poll, conducted at the end of December among a representative sample of the Jewish population in Israel, also shows that only 30 percent want to end the talks with the PLO at once, while 51 percent want to see the process proceed, though cautiously.

Some 33 percent have a positive view of and no reservations about the Oslo agreement, while 21 percent believe that although the agreement is good, it will not bring peace.

Most of those polled, both Labor and Likud supporters, believe that the key is quiet borders. An autonomy agreement that would secure quiet borders is supported by 60 percent of the Likud voters and by 99 percent of Labor voters. At the same time, if terrorists continue murdering Jews after an agreement is signed, 70 percent will regard this a failure. There was no difference between Labor and Likud voters' stands on this issue. The agreement will also be perceived as a failure if, after the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] pull out of the Gaza Strip, the PLO fails to seize control.

The authors of the poll state in conclusion: Some 60 percent of the public support a cautious promotion of the peace process; the public is very sensitive to murderous terror attacks, and will not regard a peace agreement while terror continues a success; the public is split in its stands regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state and the evacuation of settlements.

The Labor public relations department closely examined the poll results, and plans the party's updated public relations campaign strategy in accordance with the findings. It is clear to Labor officials that the guideline should be the claim that peace will bring security. The Labor campaigners are also clear that the fact that military men are in charge of the negotiations should be stressed to the public, hence—the IDF will be able to defend the peace agreement and the borders it entails.

Iraq's Tariq 'Aziz Arrives for Brief Visit

JN1601090194 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 16 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] Amman—SAWT AL-SHA'B—Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz arrived in Amman last night on a brief visit to Jordan. During the visit, 'Aziz will meet with Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali and a number of senior officials to discuss bilateral relations and to review Arab and international developments.

'Aziz is expected to leave for New York soon to hold talks with senior UN officials on lifting the international embargo imposed on Iraq. [Amman JORDAN TIMES in English on 16 January publishes on its front-page a 170-word AP report on 'Aziz's arrival in Amman in which it cites "diplomats" as saying that "Iraq is seeking Jordan's intervention with Washington to help lift the sweeping embargo imposed on Baghdad following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait." The report adds that Tariq 'Aziz arrived in Amman "to relay Baghdad's request."]

Seeks King's Mediation With U.S.

JN1701162294 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 17 Jan 94 p 10

[By a JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—Prime Minister 'Abd al-Salam al-Majali Sunday [16 January] met with Iraqi deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz for talks on Jordanian-Iraqi relations, officials said.

Diplomatic sources said Mr. 'Aziz, who arrived here Saturday, was seeking Jordanian intervention with Washington to end the international sanctions imposed against his country following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

No official comment was available on the al-Majali-'Aziz talks, which were attended by other ministers. Officials who spoke on condition of anonymity said the meeting covered a broad review of Jordanian-Iraqi relations.

But according to the diplomatic sources, Mr. 'Aziz wanted to request Jordan to raise the issue of the sanctions during the Jan. 21 meeting at the White House between His Majesty King Husayn and President Bill Clinton.

"Iraq has met all the requirements of the U.N. resolutions" related to the Gulf war ceasefire in March and April 1991, and, "as such, Iraq believes that the sanctions should be removed as soon as possible," said a diplomatic sources.

"It is a straight-forward move and Mr. 'Aziz's talks in Amman come in the context of the international efforts exerted by Iraq to end the sanctions," added the source. There was no immediate word on how Jordan was responding to the Iraqi request.

Dr. al-Majali and Royal Court Chief Sharif Zayd Bin Shakir as well as several other members of the Cabinet are expected to leave for Washington Tuesday to join King Husayn in his meeting with President Clinton.

Jordan has repeatedly invited international attention to the suffering of the Iraqi people, particularly children and the elderly, who are net victims of the sanctions, which have deprived the country of external revenues to pay for its people's needs.

The U.N. Security Council is expected to hold a periodic review of the sanctions on Tuesday, but it is not expected to lift the embargo for at least another six months—a period that U.N. sanctions enforcement officials say is needed to ensure that long-term monitoring of Iraqi weapon development programme is in place.

Mr. 'Aziz was originally scheduled to be in New York for consultations with Security Council members this week, but the plans appeared to have been called off.

Instead, Iraq is focusing on facilitating the mission of U.N. weapon experts' mission in its soil with a view to securing a clean certificate in February or early March to be presented to the Security Council with a request that the sanctions be lifted at the next round of the review of the embargo.

Mr. 'Aziz's talks with Dr. al-Majali followed the renewal of an agreement under which Iraq supplies Jordan's oil needs. The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Saturday that the agreement, signed by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Walid 'Asfur and Iraqi Oil Minister Safa' Hadi Jawad, covered a broad range of cooperation in the oil industry. No Jordanian confirmation of the INA report was available.

Grid-link talks

Dr. 'Asfur, who began a visit to Baghdad last week, is also attending a meeting with the energy ministers of Iraq, Egypt and Turkey on cooperation in electricity generation and supply.

The meeting, which began in the Iraqi capital on Saturday, is expected to produce technical agreements that will pave the way for linking the power grids of the four countries at a cost of $450 million.

The meeting is expected to produce technical agreements that will enable the four countries working in earnest on a $450 million project. [sentence as published]

The five countries signed cooperation protocols in Amman last year to push ahead with the project, which will not violate U.N. sanctions as it is not expected to be implemented in Iraq until the end of the decade.

Zaki 'Awdah, Syria's electricity chief, said funding was not a problem as Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank had pledged to finance the project.

Hasan Mahmud Sa'id, Egypt's electricity undersecretary, said energy ministers of the five countries planned to meet in Egypt in April to put the last touches to the mutual agreements.

He said Egypt and Jordan were already working on linking up their two countries' power networks. He said he hoped the agreements would be fully implemented by 1997.

The project's economic viability is based on an estimated $2 to $3 billion savings in annual electricity generation costs after its expected inauguration in 1998.

Iraq Reportedly Agrees To Continue Supplying Oil

JN1601103194 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 16 Jan 94 p 3

[By unidentified JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—Iraq has agreed to continue supplying oil to Jordan under an exemption granted by the U.N. Security Council during talks in Baghdad last week between Jordan's energy and natural resources minister and Iraqi officials, informed sources said.

They said Minister Walid 'Asfur held a series of talks starting with Iraqi Oil Minister Safa' Hadi Jawad and other ministers as well as Prime Minister Ahmad Husayn Khuddayir.

Dr. 'Asfur also met with presidential adviser Ja'far Dhiya' Ja'far, reports from Baghdad said.

"During the talks, Iraq agreed to renew the annual agreement on oil supplies to Jordan and the accord could be formalised soon," said one source. No details of the agreement were immediately available; nor was it known whether it differed much from the 1993 accord.

Under a tacit exemption granted by the U.N. Security Council, which imposed a sweeping international embargo against Iraq following Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, Iraq is allowed to export oil to Jordan.

Jordan gets an average of 50,000 barrels of crude oil and 20,000 barrels of fuel oil from Iraq trucked overland daily to the Kingdom's refinery in al-Zarqa'.

No cash is changing hands in the deal since the oil is supplied partly free and partly in settlement of Iraqi debts to Jordan.

The sources said the main purpose of Mr. 'Asfur's visit to Baghdad, where he arrived Wednesday, was to renew the oil agreeent and that he also held general discussions on Jordanian-Iraqi ties and prospects of cooperation after the expected lifting of sanctions.

"The (Iraqi) government is highly hopeful that the sanctions could be lifted before April, although U.N. officials have said that it could not be done before June," said a diplomatic source.

According to the source, the Iraqi government, which accepted long-term monitoring of its weapons programme late last year after a protracted stand-off with the U.N., was focusing on the work of U.N. inspectors in Iraq with a view to getting a clean certificate from them before March.

"Iraqi officials have been holding extensive discussions with representatives of major international oil companies on post-sanctions cooperation," said a highly-informed diplomat. "These included American as well European, particularly French and Italian firms."

Also expected to be raised during Dr. 'Asfur's visit to Baghdad was Jordanian concern over the impact of the reopening of Iraq's Umm Qasr Port on the flow of Iraq-bound cargo through al-'Aqabah.

In talks in Amman in late November, Iraqi officials assured Jordan that the flow of Iraqi imports, which has dwindled to 20 per cent of pre-crisis levels, would continue and that Umm Qasr, Iraq's only outlet to the Gulf, would be used to accommodate small freighters with cargo from the far east.

The U.N. Security Council is due to meet on Tuesday to decide whether to maintain the international embargo against Iraq.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported late Saturday that Jordan and Iraq signed an agreement in which they agreed to cooperate in 'all key oil industries, including excavating and digging."

The agreement covers bilateral cooperation in all the sectors of the oil industry, including drilling and exploration, along with Iraqi technical assistance for the Jordanian oil industry and training for Jordanian oil workers, INA said.

'Officials' Cited on Upcoming King-Clinton Talks

JN1501084794 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 15 Jan 94 pp 1, 5

[By unidentifed JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—His Majesty King Husayn is scheduled to meet with U.S. President Bill Clinton on Jan. 21 for talks on issues ranging from the Middle East peace process to American-Jordanian relations, officials here and in Washington said.

The King, who left for London last week for a short stay in Britain, is expected to head for Rochester, Minnesota, soon for medical checkups at the Mayo Clinic. Following the check-up, the King will spend a few days in the state of Colorado on a private visit before proceeding to Washington to meet Mr. Clinton.

Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali and several members of his Cabinet are expected to head for Washington this week to join the King in his talks with Mr. Clinton.

It will be the second White House meeting between the King and Mr. Clinton. The two leaders met first in June.

Among the issues that are expected to be discussed between the King and President Clinton are the course of the peace process, U.S.-Jordan economic cooperation and military ties, officials said.

The king will brief the president on the progress of negotiations between Jordan and Israel, and reiterate that there cannot be any signing of a peace agreement separate from an overall accord addressing all the four tracks of the Arab-Israeli negotiations launched in Madrid in October 1991.

All indications are that Sunday's summit in Geneva between President Clinton and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad could produce a major breakthrough to lift the logjam in the Syrian-Israeli track of negotiations, and, by extension, advance the Lebanese-Israeli peace talks.

As such, analysts say, the King's meeting with President Clinton comes at a crucial stage in the quest for peace in the Middle East in that he would have known by then the result of the U.S.-Syrian summit by Jan. 21 and could formulate Jordan's next steps accordingly.

King Husayn was in touch with President al-Asad over the phone on Thursday. Reports from Damascus said the two leaders exchanged views on the current moves in the peace process and means to advance the Arab-Israeli negotiations. In the meantime, it was reported from Washington that the next round of Arab-Israeli peace talks would begin there on Jan. 24.

On the bilateral front, the King and President Clinton are expected to review the work of a joint Jordanian-American-Israeli economic working group and ideas and proposals discussed during the Middle East visit in December of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

The conclusion of an agreement on reopening Jordanian commerical banks in the occupied territories is the only concrete result so far of the work of the group. Negotiations on the accord had started alsmost one year before the group was formed during a visit by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan to Washington in October.

Proposals for joint projects and American suggestions of "confidence-building measures" between Jordan and Israel are also expected to be reviewed by King Husayn and President Clinton.

Prime Minister al-Majali, who delayed his departure for Washington for a few days so that he could meet with visiting U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown on Monday, told reporters last week that Jordan hoped "for continuous support of the Jordanian economy and defence forces as well as debt reduction."

President Clinton has pledged to help Jordan in addressing its foreign debts, and diplomats say that one of the measures under consideration could be a write-off of part of the Kingdom's debts to the U.S.

Amman owes Washington $946 million, including $380 million in military debts incurred during the 1980s, when Jordan depended solely on the U.S. to equip its armed forces. In 1987, Jordan turned to the then Soviet Union for its needs of a defensive missile system after the Reagan administration flatly turned down a $1.8 billion arms package for the Kingdom.

Jordanian-American military ties have been renewed since then. Armed forces of the two sides held at least three joint military exercises in the southern desert and the Red Sea after the end of the Gulf war over Kuwait in 1991.

General Joseph Hoar, head of the U.S. Central Command, was in Jordan last week on his third visit to the Kingdom after assuming office in 1991.

His Royal Highness Prince Muhammad, the Regent, and Dr. al-Majali, who is also defence minister, held talks with Gen. Hoar. Ideas discussed during the meeting are expected to be explored during the King's summit with President Clinton.

Official and informed sources say that despite President Clinton's pledge in October, even the release of up to $35 million in aid to Jordan has been held up.

The administration issued a certification to release the aid on Sept. 15, one day after Jordan and Israel signed an agenda outlining the basis for negotiations and a peace agreement.

Also expected to be raised during the White House meeting are Jordan's concerns over the de facto blockade of al-'Aqabah as part of the enforcement of the international sanctions against Iraq and what officials here describe as stalling at the U.N. over Jordan's requests for permission for exports of sanction-exempt food and medicine to Iraq.

U.S. Commerce Secretary, Delegation Pay Visit

Brown on 'Better Equilibrium in Trade'

JN1701111094 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0900 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ronald Brown has arrived in Amman on the first visit by a U.S. trade chief to Jordan. Mr. Brown is scheduled to meet His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, and Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali. Discussions will focus on exploring possibilities of enhanced economic cooperation between the U.S. and Jordan.

Mr. Brown, who arrived from Saudi Arabia, is accompanied by a trade delegation, including administration officials and representatives of American firms.

The commerce secretary has agreed that there had to be a better equilibrium in trade between the U.S. and Jordan. The Kingdom bought more than $300 million in American products in 1993, while exporting less than $5 million.

Prime Minister Receives Brown

JN1701115894 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali received U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ronald Brown at his office at the Prime Ministry today.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral ties, particularly in the fields of economy and trade, the means of enhancing and promoting them, as well as the issue of the blockade imposed on the Port of al-'Aqabah and the need to facilitate the measures to mitigate the negative impact of this blockade and its repercussions on the Jordanian market.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Ma'in Abu-Nuwar, Minister of Industry and Commerce Dr. Rima Khalaf, Central Bank of Jordan Deputy Governor Michel Martu, the U.S. charge d'affaires in Amman, and the delegation accompanying the guest minister.

Trade Talks With U.S. Detailed

JN1701194994 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] The Jordanian side led by Dr. Rima Khalaf, the minister of industry and commerce, and the U.S. side led by Mr. Ronald Brown, the U.S. secretary of commerce, held a meeting at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce today in the presence of Dr. Ziyad Fariz, the minister of planning; Sami Qammuh, the minister of finance; and a number of officials in the public and private sectors from both countries. The two sides discussed bilateral trade relations and means to bolster and develop these relations. Details are in the following report:

Dr. Khalaf reviewed trade relations between Jordan and the United States and the great investment opportunities that the citizens are expecting as a result of the peace process in the region—a process that achieves a just, comprehensive, and durable peace and maintains Arab rights. She talked about Jordan's current economic reform program and the positive results of this program. She noted that the Gulf war had a negative impact on the program, which led to its interruption for a period of time.

The minister said that Jordan is an important partner to the United States, pointing out that Jordan's import of U.S. goods is 23 percent of its overall world imports at a time when Jordanian exports to the United States are very limited. In this regard, the minister expressed Jordan's desire to sign an agreement with the United States to take advantage of the preferential U.S. trade system, based on which exports to the United States, including Jordanian exports, are given privileges such as customs exemption. She noted that Jordanian exporters faced some difficulties as a result of being excluded from this system and its privileges. Dr. Khalaf said that Jordan is seeking to improve the investment climate in order to find appropriate trade relations with the world, including the United States.

Minister of Planning Dr. Ziyad Fariz said that Jordan began planning policies in the areas of investment and development of exports in 1989. He noted that the Ministry is seeking to privatize some of the public sector's properties, adding that this requires assistance as well as a solution to the social problems that could result from this. He said there are economic and social reforms in this field such as developing the health system.

Dr. Fariz also talked about Jordan's efforts to solve the problem of Jordan's debts to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Moreover, the minister of planning presented to the U.S. secretary of commerce a paper that summarizes the most important economic and social problems and challenges facing Jordan.

Minister of Finance Sami Qammuh talked about Jordan's debt of $7.5 million, which obstructs the process of serving commerce and investment. He noted that this debt needs to be written off.

For his part, the U.S. Secretary of Commerce talked about the importance of trade exchange between Jordan and the United States and the prospects of trade in the region as a result of the peace process. He noted the importance of Jordan's geographical location, which allows it to play a big role in reinforcing trade in the Middle East. He welcomed economic reforms in Jordan, which include encouraging the private sector and reinforcing its role in investment opportunities. He noted the possibility of cooperation between Jordanian and U.S. businessmen to encourage the private sectors of both countries to get involved in various forms of investment. He welcomed the idea of opening a number of branches for Jordanian banks in the occupied Arab territories, which will provide for broader cooperation between the banking sectors of Jordan and the United States.

The Jordanian and U.S. sides exchanged ideas on the possibilities for commercial cooperation and on encouraging the private sector's role in this field. Khaldun Abu-Hassan, head of Amman's Chamber of Industry, talked about the embargo imposed on Jordanian goods at the port of al-'Aqabah, stressing the need to provide the private sectors of both countries with opportunities for investment and commercial exchange.

Crown Prince Hasan Receives Brown

JN1701200594 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Within the framework of enhancing Jordanian-U.S. trade relations, His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, received U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ronald Brown at the Royal Hashemite Court today. At the beginning of the meeting, the U.S. secretary of commerce handed a message to His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, from U.S. President Bill Clinton to His Majesty King Husayn.

His highness explained to the American guest Jordan's concept of world trade and the need to base this trade on human requirements rather than on abstract dimensions on the levels of Jordanian-U.S. relations and the region as a whole.

His highness, the regent, called for defining just and human criteria in the world trade system to guarantee the rights of states and individuals, particularly in the Middle East.

[Begin recording in English] [Brown] Well, we had a very frank and cordial discussion. Some creative new ideas about not only how to enhance the bilateral relationship between the United States and Jordan, but how to engender some real regional cooperation, some focus on specific goals, some focus on mechanisms for achieving those goals and to really create a public-private partnership. So, it is not only bilateral relationships or regional relationships between governments, but getting the private sector involved as well. It is clear that there are many other economic challenges that the region faces and many that Jordan faces, and the United States wants to play a helpful role in trying to deal directly with those issues. I think the peace process moving forward gives us a very real opportunity. As we move towards peace, expectations that people's lives will change in a real and positive way are accelerated, and we have to find ways to meet those expectations. I was very pleased with the conversation that we had with his royal highness the crown prince, and I believe that we will pursue those discussions very actively in the future.

[Reporter] Did you discuss the U.S. inspection team in the Port of Aqabah?

[Brown] I discussed it with some of the ministers of the Jordanian Government earlier today. I now am increasingly sensitive about the impact that it is having on the Jordanian economy, and I intend to pursue those discussions when I get back to Washington. There certainly ought to be ways for us to be in compliance with the United Nations' resolutions, but in ways that do not debilitate the economy of Jordan.

[Reporter] Your Excellency, Your Royal Highness: Would you like to give us a statement about the meeting?

[Hasan] Well, I just like to say that when we met with President Clinton and Foreign Minister Peres on the White House lawn, we said that there is much to be done on the ground, and I would like to say that the secretary of commerce's visit to Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, and Egypt is a clear indication of the desire to achieve results in terms of understanding trade patterns, in terms of encouraging investment, in terms of thinking regionally, and it is a very practical series of meetings I believe that it had been held here today. And given the optimism coming out of the meetings in Geneva and the forthcoming meeting between His Majesty King Husayn and President Clinton, I think that we are certainly putting a lot practical paint on the canvas in terms of our joint understanding of what it takes to make peace matter to people on the ground here in the region. [end recording]

Prince Hasan on Boycott of Israel, Trade

JN1701212794 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 17 Jan 94

[From the "News at Ten" program]

[Text] His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan received a U.S. economic delegation led by Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown. Mr. Brown conveyed to the regent a message from President Bill Clinton addressed to his majesty the king. The U.S. secretary met other officials for economic talks and the negative economic effects of the blockade on the port of al-'Aqabah. He said that the removal of trade barriers and the lifting of the Arab boycott of Israel would help speed the economic growth in the region.

At the Royal Court meeting His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan told the American Secretary of Commerce that international trade should not be limited to the sole purpose of trade but also take into consideration human needs. The regent said that a humanitarian criteria in trade should be introduced to guarantee the rights of states and the individual, particularly with regard to the Middle East. His royal highness said a lot has to be done towards regional economic cooperation. [passage omitted]

Commenting on calls for lifting the Arab boycott of Israel, the regent said:

[Begin Hasan recording] This is a question that has to be discussed within the context of peace making clearly. But, I was very happy during the MEED [Middle East Economic Digest] conference in London last week to emphasize the importance of the Middle East as free trade area. This is a goal to which we all have to work with ("conscience") and a great deal of understanding. And I think that this understanding is developing as a result of these personal contacts. [end recording]

Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali also discussed with the American official economic ties and the inspection of shipping into the port of al-'Aqabah and the need to lift the blockade.

[Begin Brown recording] I now am increasingly sensitive about the impact that it's having on the Jordanian economy and I intend to pursue those discussions when I get back to Washington. There certainly ought to be ways so as to be in compliance with United Nations resolutions but in ways that do not debilitate the economy of Jordan. [end recording]

Secretary Brown's Tour Viewed

JN1801140794 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 18 Jan 94 pp 1, 22

[Editorial: "Trade, Peace, and al-'Aqabah Siege"]

[Text] During his meeting with the visiting U.S. commerce secretary, His Highness Prince Hasan the regent stressed that trade, whether on the bilateral level or on the level of the region as a whole, must be based on the human needs. This requires that the world trade system have fair and humanitarian criteria to guarantee the right of both states and individuals.

The tour by the U.S. commerce secretary to a number of states in the region provides evidence of the joint desire to achieve the expected results concerning the forms of regional trade, especially since this tour coincided with important meetings in Geneva and came on the eve of another very important meeting, expected to be held in Washington in the next few days between His Majesty King Husayn and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The visit by the U.S. commerce secretary has raised many concerns, not only about the future of the regional trade links in the age of the desired peace, but also about the current situation in Jordan's only seaport. The partial siege imposed by the U.S. Navy on al-'Aqabah still stands, making our country suffer losses which it cannot put up with forever.

The U.S. secretary did well when he showed an understanding of the Jordanian viewpoint about the losses resulting from the continued sea siege of al-'Aqabah. It is, however, regrettable to say that the U.S. commerce secretary is not the first U.S. official to show such an understanding and to promise, like the visiting secretary has done, to discuss this issue with the competent U.S. authorities to ease these unjustified measures, which have remained unchanged.

In the light of all this, we hope the new promise made by the U.S. secretary will mark the end of a series of promises which do not have any real weight now that the siege on al-'Aqabah has been going on for more than three years. During this time the Jordanian national economy has suffered additional losses which have exacerbated the economic difficulties Jordan has been facing since the second Gulf war.

U.S.-Russian Statement on Mideast Peace Welcomed

JN1501115994 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 15 Jan 94 pp 1, 28

[Editorial: "A Position That Needs Implementation"]

[Text] We strongly welcome the U.S.-Russian statement emanating from the Clinton-Yeltsin summit in Moscow yesterday. The statement emphasized the eagerness of the cosponsors of the Middle East peace conference to realize just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region on the basis of international legitimacy resolutions led by Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of land for peace.

The importance of the statement lies in the fact that it was made on the eve of the summit between U.S. President Clinton and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, which will be held in Geneva tomorrow. Political circles attach much importance to this meeting in paving the way for serious and substantial progress in the faltering peace process. Also, the meeting comes in the wake of the ongoing problems facing the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on implementation of Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.

The statement's emphasis on the principle of just and comprehensive peace based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 clarifies the course of the peace process on all its tracks. These tracks are facing Israeli rejection and maneuvers regarding a comprehensive solution to the Middle East issue. Israel evades commitment to Resolutions 242 and 338, which call for its full withdrawal from all occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and recognition of the Palestinian people's legitimate right to self-determination on their soil.

Israel's attempts to evade its commitment to this principle, and its positions that conflict with the Declaration of Principles it signed with the PLO which calls for full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, and its attempt to deprive the self-rule areas and their crossing points of any vestiges of Palestinian sovereignty are the strongest evidence of Israel's intentions and rejection of a comprehensive solution and the international and legal terms of reference of such a solution, as well as its contempt for the cosponsors of the peace conference and the peace process as a whole.

If we take into consideration Israel's despicable rejection of even declaring commitment to withdraw fully from the occupied Syrian Golan, its placing of impossible conditions on the negotiations on the Syrian track, and its insistence that Damascus should define its concept of peace, we will conclude that Rabin's government is following a policy of maneuvering and deception regarding the achievement of serious progress on the Syrian-Israeli track. Israel is also placing similar conditions on Lebanon to obstruct implementation of Security Council Resolution 425, which calls for immediate withdrawal from occupied southern Lebanon.

Therefore, the U.S.-Russian statement is a positive prelude to the Clinton-al-Asad meeting in Geneva tomorrow, which will establish the bases for activating an effective and influential U.S. role in forcing Israel to heed the will of the international community, UN resolutions, and the principles on the basis of which the Madrid peace conference was held, and to which the cosponsors were committed, and which they emphasized in their latest statement.

The Arabs are not prepared to relinquish their land and rights after they have offered all they can to render the peace process successful. Washington and Moscow should not be satisfied with mere statements, and should play their role as cosponsors of this process, otherwise, the statement will be no more than worthless ink on paper.

Crown Prince Hasan Comments on UK Meetings

JN1601220894 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Their Highnesses Crown Prince Hasan and Princess Tharwat returned to Amman this evening after a several-day working visit his highness paid to the United Kingdom. During the visit, his highness held talks with British Prime Minister John Major on the political situation in the region, bilateral relations, and the situation in the Balkan states. His Highness Crown Prince Hasan also addressed a conference on the economics of peace in the Middle East. His highness also took part in a meeting held by the Board of Trustees of the Refugees Institute at Oxford University.

At hand to receive his highness were His Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-al-Husayn, His Highness Prince Ghazi Bin-Muhammad, a number of their highnesses the princes and princesses, the prime minister, the speakers of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and top civil and military officials.

His highness spoke about his meeting with the British prime minister. He said:

[Begin recording] [Hasan] We met after British Prime Minister Major's return from Brussels. He was preoccupied with a basic issue; that is, the issue of Yugoslavia. As you know, the U.S. initiative was seeking to achieve peace within the European framework. It seems there were strong feelings about what initiative should be taken in order to contain the ongoing tension, especially in Tusla and (Serbrenica), when it came to talk about replacing the Canadian and Dutch forces. Nevertheless, British Prime Minister Major was concerned about the need to clarify this issue to the world. I had the chance to stress the need to condemn those who carry out acts of violence, whoever they may be and wherever they are, in order to enable the UN forces to carry out their tasks and missions.

[Reporter] During the conference on the economics of peace in the Middle East, you stressed that it is necessary for peace to reflect on the man in the street. How did intellectuals and politicians in Europe react to this call?

[Hasan] Just as an investment framework for a regional meeting is being pursued, we are also pursuing a human framework for meetings that practically define the world community's stand toward the human being, the refugee, the evacuee, and the expellee. Unless this crystallizes into a world vision, it will be hard to talk about a systematic continuation of the peace course. Regarding UN institutions, as well as those institutions concerned with refugee affairs, I noticed there is an inclination to move toward a comprehensive vision. This vision applies equally to the World Bank. It is summed in the need to establish regional institutions, including a regional development bank, that deals, according to internationally accepted standards, with all those who seek help and assistance at this stage, in order to invest in the human being and make him part of the peace course.

[Reporter] Sir, you are now the head of the newly re-formed Royal Commission for Jerusalem Affairs as delegated by his majesty the king. In your opinion, what are the next steps toward Jerusalem in response to his majesty's call, in his letter to the prime minister, to activate this committee to protect Holy Jerusalem?

[Hasan] His majesty the king granted me and my colleagues this great honor. I hope that we will be able to fulfill the duties required of us at this stage within two phases of action. The first is a phase that will continue in the future; that is, maintaining Jordan's concern with Jerusalem through the Awqaf institutions that work on the ground in Jerusalem. When we talk about the Royal Commission, we are talking about a unique Hashemite Jordanian support for the Arab and Islamic identity. We must define this unique role and work toward reaching deep understanding of all our responsibilities at this stage.

The second role is to acquaint scholars from the Islamic world with ethical supremacy, including its dimensions and various literature. As for the Arab and Islamic right and duty, naturally, there is much room for action within the framework of Jerusalem and the holy places in Palestine. I should recall that there is dearth of discussion in this field within the Islamic and Arab framework. In fact, we need to sharpen the conscience and mind. I believe that seeking assistance from an elite of scholars in the Islamic world, for which the opportunity is open, is a very important and critical issue at this particular stage. [end recording]

His Highness Crown Prince Hasan this evening took the constitutional oath as regent, during his majesty the king's presence abroad, before the cabinet and in the presence of speakers of the Senate and House of Representatives.

Al-Majali on Arab Reconciliation, Issues

JN1801111094 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 18 Jan 94 pp 1, 5

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—Jordan has been playing an active role towards bringing about reconciliation among Arab countries and is ready to embark on any step that would contribute to achieving that goal, Prime Minister 'Abd al-Salam al-Majali was quoted as saying Monday [17 January].

"Jordan is doing all it can to achieve Arab reconciliation and is ready to do anything for the sake of the Arab Nation," Dr. al-Majali said in an interview published in the United Arab Emirate's (UAE) AL-ITTIHAD newspaper.

"A reconciliation should cover all types of cooperation, including political, economic, cultural and social."

His Majesty King Husayn's visit to the United States, the prime minisiter said, aims to give impetus to the peace process which is now facing some difficulties. The King is also seeking to bolster the Jordanian Armed Forces and will conduct a comprehensive review of Jordanian-U.S. relations, he said.

In reply to a question, Dr. al-Majali said Jordan appreciated and supported UAE President Shaykh Zayid Bin Sultan Al Nahayan's initiative to restore Arab solidarity.

The prime minister described Jordanian-UAR relations as brotherly ties and noted that Jordanians working in the UAE have always been treated on equal footing with the UAE people.

On Jordan's mediation to end the dispute among the leaders of Yemen, Dr. al-Majali said His Majesty King Husayn had delegated Royal Court chief Sharif Zayd Bin Shakir to act as mediator carrying royal messages to the Yemeni leaders.

"Jordan considers any sucess of any Arab unity as success for Jordan, which seeks a greater Arab unity," he said. "It is up to the Yemeni brothers to resolve their problems amicably and Jordan would spare no effort to help them do that."

Nothing that is was the Yemeni leaders who had requested the King's mediation, Dr. al-Majali said that the unity in Yemen concerns the whole Arab world and not Jordan and Yemen alone.

Commenting on coordination between Arab states involved in the peace process, Dr. al-Majali said Jordan is committed to that coordination, and it hopes that the Arab parties will succeed in exchanging land for peace in implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

"A just durable peace in Jordan's view entails the return of the usurped land and water rights and the end of suffering of the people in the region," he said.

Commenting on the Oslo accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), he said that the deal was meant as a declaration of principles and Jordan has no alternative but to support the Palestinians in their drive to regain their rights.

"Any gains achieved by the Palestinians would reflect positively on us because we are brothers and together form one nation," Dr. al-Majali said.

On the future Palestinian-Jordanian relationship, he said that the people on the two sides of the River Jordan would have to decide on it and determine the nature of union between them when the time is right.

Dr. al-Majali urged Arab states to join Western creditors in rescheduling its debts to revive the economy, rocked by foreign debt and a sharp decline in aid.

Dr. al-Majali said the domestic economy had started to improve since Jordan launched reforms.

"We have overcome the most difficult stages and Jordan hopes sisterly countries (Arabs) will show understanding as was done by friendly countries, which have rescheduled our debts," he said.

Dr. al-Majali did not name the Arab creditors nor give figures.

According to official Arab figures, Jordan received around $2.1 billion of $19.5 billion extended by Gulf states in loans, and grants in the five years before the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

It has also received more than 10 per cent of the total Arab aid of nearly $100 billion provided between 1970 and 1992.

Buwayz Comments on U.S.-Syria Summit in Geneva

Comments on U.S. 'Dynamism'

NC1601083994 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz in his office in Beirut by unidentified Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation correspondent in Geneva; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Buwayz] I believe that whoever expects this [U.S.-Syrian] summit to be preplanned is wrong. Whoever believes that this summit is an uncalculated adventure that was not prepared for is equally wrong. I think that this summit will involve basic principles and main courses that will be agreed upon. It will also involve certain limits to be negotiated.

[Correspondent] In your view, what are the main topics that will be discussed?

[Buwayz] I believe that this summit will discuss different topics, including the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and ways to guarantee Israel's withdrawal from this region, the peace process, Gaza-Jericho, and regional stability—or rather the strategic vision of the future situation in the region.

[Correspondent] Do you believe that the U.S. side has shifted from its role as an impartial mediator to that of the full partner, as al-Asad wants, and that it is trying to convey a specific Israeli proposal to Syria to move negotiations ahead?

[Buwyaz] This summit undoubtedly comes after an obstruction to the Gaza-Jericho agreement, as well as a stalemate on the Jordanian- Israeli and Syrian- and Lebanese-Israeli tracks. I believe that the United States is fully aware of the need to abandon the theory of seeking independent, unilateral agreements and to work toward a comprehensive peace involving all.

Judging by that principle, which governs the Geneva meeting, I think that the United States has a new dynamism and that a new daring approach might characterize the U.S. role in this summit, and maybe after it. This new approach is based on a U.S. belief that the stalemate that characterized negotiations for more than two years must be handled by a different approach.

[Correspondent] President Ilyas al-Hirawi yesterday said that President al-Asad is negotiating on behalf of all Arabs, particularly Lebanon, and that he will not relinquish Arab rights. However, U.S. Ambassador in Beirut Mark Hambley said a few days ago that Lebanon might not be a separate topic on the summit agenda. Can you comment?

[Buwayz] In fact, these two views do not conflict. I believe that President al-Asad this time and at this particular moment embodies a basic regional power that has influence at the Palestinian level and accordingly influences what happens in Gaza and Jericho, on a moral level in Jordan and in Lebanon, in addition to the Syrian level, of course.

Accordingly, President al-Asad is, of course, a regional negotiator in this summit, because what he will talk about will go beyond the occupied Syrian Golan. Moreover, President Clinton represents an international power. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the eastern bloc, the United States has become the sole superpower, holding many political, economic, and technological cards.

Hence, I believe that the Lebanese issue—that is Lebanon's rights—might not be discussed in this summit. The issue is not under discussion. The issue is very clear: Either there is a real and comprehensive peace and Israel will accordingly undertake to withdraw fully from south Lebanon to the internationally-recognized borders [sentence as heard]. However, the Israeli occupation involves some points related to the regional situation. So long as there are regional solutions, solutions to these points could also be found.

Pessimistic on Prospects for Nation

JN1601095994 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0855 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 16 Jan (WAKH)—Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has expressed pessimism over the prospects of the Syrian-U.S. summit, due to convene in Geneva later today, for Lebanon.

The newspaper AL-ITTIHAD, published here today, quoted the Lebanese minister as saying that the security situation in southern Lebanon, which is linked to regional considerations, will be discussed during the summit. This could reflect positively on the situation in southern Lebanon, and could consequently push for a solution to that issue, he noted.

On the peace negotiations, the Lebanese minister said that no decision to resume the negotiations has thus far been made. As for Lebanon's position on participation in the next round of negotiations, it will be decided in light of the talks held in Washington by the head of the Lebanese negotiating delegation, and the outcome of the U.S.-Syrian summit, Buwayz maintained.

Buwayz affirmed that nothing has changed about the U.S. assurances provided to Lebanon. He added that the U.S. Administration has not marked any departure from these assurances. He affirmed that there can be no solution or progress on the Lebanese track of negotiations unless Israel subscribes to complete withdrawal from the occupied Lebanese territories.

The Lebanese foreign minister accused Israel of effecting a military and political escalation whenever a new chapter in the peace process is heralded.

Comments After al-Hariri Meeting

NC1701130994 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has visited Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri together with Ambassador Suhayl Shammas; and he has evaluated the results of the summit. [passage omitted]

At the Foreign Ministry, Buwayz said that any progress on one track is beneficial for the remaining tracks. He said: I believe that peace can only be comprehensive. Comprehensiveness means progress on all paths.

Further Comments After al-Hariri Talks

NC1701172894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 Jan 94

[News conference by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz with unidentified correspondents' after his meeting with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri in Beirut on 17 January—recorded]

[Text] [Buwayz] Doubtlessly, the U.S.-Syrian summit shows clear indications about the future of the peace negotiations. The first signs coming from this summit suggest that the principle of achieving progress on all the negotiating tracks has been accepted. Formerly, there were numerous attempts to isolate the Arab parties and deal with each of them separately. The U.S.-Syrian meeting also appears to have clarified other basic principles of the peace process. I have said that it is wrong to believe that a meeting of heads of state would deal with details. It is also wrong to believe that such a summit meeting is an uncalculated adventure. In other words, I believe that the summit has successfully laid down general principles and fundamental policies in connection with the peace operation. I am sure that this will have a favorable effect on the Lebanese negotiating track [words indistinct].

[Correspondent] Has there been any contact between you and the Syrian foreign minister?

[Buwayz] I believe that a meeting will be held shortly to clarify certain points that have not been fully outlined.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, you have noted that the summit will have a favorable effect on the Lebanese negotiating track. In what way do you think this will happen?

[Buwayz] You know that the Lebanese negotiating track and the issue of south Lebanon, though primarily dealing with private Lebanese affairs, are also linked to the general regional situation, both with regard to the peace process and a prospective peace agreement. Lebanon has repeatedly declared that it will not sign a peace agreement except in concert with the other Arab brothers and after all Arab rights have been secured. Additionally, there are actual conditions in the field that are connected to the regional situation. Doubtlessly, the broad outlines agreed upon yesterday will have a positive effect on these conditions and give fresh impetus to the negotiations.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, what impressions did you get while following the U.S.-Syrian summit yesterday?

[Buwayz] Of course, it was a summit meeting between the President of the United States whose decisions, following the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc, are significant on the international level, and President al-Asad, who holds several cards enabling him to negotiate from a position of power. The dialogue, therefore, took place between two strong figures who were able to make decisions and commitments. This is a very important point. I also feel that the dialogue was between two people fully conversant with the complexity of the Middle East crisis and its secondary problems and able to handle them.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, what do you think about the Israeli condition to halt resistance operations before a solution is reached?

[Buwayz] We have repeatedly said that the resistance in the south is a consequence of the occupation and can never end until the occupation is terminated.

Buwayz, Ex-Prime Minister al-Huss on Geneva Summit

NC1701112194 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1000 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has said that the Geneva summit has established the basis for an understanding that will become evident when the Arab and Israeli negotiators meet in Washington. Buwayz said that President al-Asad's use of the term "the peace of the brave" is a clear indication of the existence of an understanding, at least along broad lines. He added: Whoever thought that this summit would be an adventure was wrong.

Former Prime Minister Dr. Salim al-Huss maintained that the Syrian-U.S. summit has given an important push to the peace process in the area. He said: President al-Asad, as usual, stuck to his guns regarding the correlation of the Syrian, Lebanese, and Jordanian tracks, and he emphasized the need to abide by UN Resolution 425, which concerns Lebanon. In doing so, he was speaking as an Arab president who is aware of his pan-Arab responsibilities. He was great in clearly expressing commitment to a just and comprehensive peace to safeguard the Arabs' interests and rights.

Buwayz Sees 'Positive Results' in Washington Talks

NC1701133694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1113 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Beirut, 17 Jan (MENA)—Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has ruled out the possibility of holding a meeting of the cordon countries—Syria,

Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and the PLO—ahead of the coming round of peace talks in Washington. Buwayz told MENA that no arrangements have been made for such a meeting because time is short. The Lebanese minister said that Arab delegations to the peace talks will begin heading for Washington in the coming few days to prepare for another round of talks.

Buwayz said that the Washington talks will be decisive and important in light of the al-Asad-Clinton summit, where the two presidents agreed to resume these talks immediately in order to draw up a declarations of principles, particularly on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Minister Buwayz predicted that the coming talks in Washington will lead to positive results in light of the positive atmosphere created by the al-Asad-Clinton summit.

Buwayz pointed out that the Arab negotiating delegations will meet in Washington for consultations and to coordinate their positions during the talks.

Al-Hariri Discusses Results of Geneva Talks

'Optimistic' After Christopher Call

NC1601204194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri received a telephone call from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher this evening. Christopher briefed al-Hariri on the preliminary results of the Geneva talks today between U.S. President Bill Clinton and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

Al-Hariri's sources said the U.S. secretary affirmed to the prime minister that the two presidents discussed the Lebanese issue seriously and that this year will be one of prosperity and peace for the Middle East. The sources added that Christopher also affirmed to al-Hariri the positive results of the U.S.-Syrian summit.

[Paris AFP in English at 2021 GMT on 16 January adds the following: "The prime minister told AFP that Christopher telephoned him from the plane on his way back to the United States, stressing that the Lebanese question was discussed at length in Geneva.

"Hariri said he was optimistic."]

Notes 'Satisfaction' With al-Asad

NC1601222594 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2200 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Commenting on the results of the Syrian-U.S. summit in Geneva, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri said in a statement tonight: We have followed with great satisfaction the positions expressed by President Hafiz al-Asad after his talks with U.S. President Clinton. These are the positions to restore balance to the peace process and open a new chapter to which we attach importance toward achieving the just, lasting, and comprehensive peace for which we all hope.

Al-Hariri said the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon formed a basic part of the talks, in which President al-Asad adopted serious and honorable positions that are certainly appreciated by the Lebanese people and Government. He added: In my name, and on behalf of the Lebanese Government, I salute President al-Asad, who made UN Resolution 425 a main topic on the agenda of the historic summit.

On Geneva Talks, Beirut-Damascus Summit

NC1701142894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has described the U.S.-Syrian summit as positive and said he expects it to have a generally favorable effect, particularly as it also dealt with the Lebanese issue.

Al-Hariri said he learned this from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during a telephone conversation yesterday.

The prime minister did not rule out holding a Lebanese-Syrian summit soon, but did not mention a date.

Defense, Information Ministers Comment on Geneva Summit

NC1701132794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Commenting on the results of the Geneva summit, Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul has noted new trends that are becoming manifest in the Middle East. The first of these is a change in U.S. policy and its dealings with the Arabs, particularly with the Syrian president, who has proved his ability to negotiate and make great political gains through the imposition of a just and honorable settlement.

In a statement he made today, Minister Dallul paid tribute to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad for promoting the Arab position, noting that he did not treat the Golan issue as more important than the Lebanese, Jordanian, or Palestinian issues. He said that the lesson of the historic summit is summed up as the need for steadfastness in pursuing Arab rights and not to follow the method of the Gaza-Jericho agreement, which is facing new obstacles every day.

Information Minister Michel Samahah said that the summit between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton has moved the Middle East into a new era and laid the basis for achieving a just and comprehensive peace. He said: What happened yesterday put an end to efforts to achieve a separate peace. It also put an end to Israel's efforts to deal with each Arab party separately. The summit emphasized the comprehensive nature of the solution, the justness of the

Arab demands, and the need for a just and comprehensive peace based on the UN resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242, 323, and 425, and on the principle of land for peace.

Minister Samahah saluted President al-Asad for supporting Arab rights, particularly Resolution 425. He said: We must give due credit to the one who represented Arab dignity and expressed the Arab desire to negotiate on the basis of a firm and principled position, thus winning international recognition for Arab rights.

He said: The Geneva summit is a new turning point. We must face the challenge through unity. Minister Samahah was speaking at a meeting with Milhim Karam, chairman of the Editors Association, and members of the association's council.

Deputies Comment on U.S.-Syrian Summit

NC1701102494 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] The results of the historic Geneva summit between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton are attracting attention on the local, Arab, and international levels. These results are the focus of great attention, amid positive expectations. Arab and international circles have described the results as a basic and important juncture in the Middle East peace process. These circles note that President al-Asad has gained support for the Arab position by insisting on the peace of the brave, implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy, and achieving Israeli withdrawal from the south and western al-Biqa'. Positive reactions to the results of the Geneva summit are continuing.

Deputy Amin al-Hafiz [chairman of parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee] said that the results of this summit indicate that the time of separate agreements has ended. The attention given to the Lebanese situation at the summit talks is very important. President Clinton's statement that the United States supports the implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement, which gives priority to Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon through the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 425, is of particular importance. Al- Hafiz affirmed that President al-Asad had expressed the Arabs' good intentions, and the ball is now in the Israeli court. Al-Hafiz also drew attention to the role the Vatican can play in support of Lebanese rights.

Deputy Wajih al-Ba'rini maintained that the Syrian-U.S. summit represents the start of a new era of peace based on justice and equality, the restoration of the rights of oppressed peoples led by the Palestinian people, and the implementation of the UN resolutions pertaining to countries whose land is under occupation, including Lebanon and Syria. Al-Ba'rini added that the principled positions adopted by President al-Asad are a source of pride for our Arab nation. We hope that the results of this summit will benefit the peoples of the area and mark the end of conflicts in the Middle East.

Phalangist Leader on HQ Bombing, Geneva Summit

NC1701201394 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Phalangist Party Leader Dr. George Sa'adah has again warned against allowing political calculations to overshadow the ongoing investigations to uncover the identity of those who bombed the Phalangist Party headquarters along with the masterminds and instigators. He said that we will be lying in wait to foil such attempts. At an expanded meeting of the Phalangist Party Political Bureau and Central Council members at the headquarters in al-Sayfi at 1700 today, he said: Frankly speaking, we can see no difficulty in uncovering the details of the crime. In fact, we are sure that we will uncover them. The possible perpetrators are limited because the parties who are capable of preparing such operations are few, and those with places where bombs are prepared and those who have interest in this crime are all well known. There is evidence. The security agencies are active and sincere and our judges are competent, and it is not difficult for them to solve such an easy case.

Sa'adah said: What we fear are decisions dictated by political calculations. There is justification for our fear because there are attempts to acquit certain parties through tacit political decisions. We will be lying in wait for such decisions because this case exceeds our personal safety and involves political freedoms and the homeland's security and destiny. [passage omitted]

On the Syrian-U.S. summit in Geneva yesterday, Dr. Sa'adah emphasized its importance at this stage in particular. He said that it was a successful and important summit, noting that the Lebanese issue was discussed during the summit. All we hope, he said, is that the Lebanese Government will follow up on the results with sound diplomatic and political moves and benefit from its positive aspects.

Fadlallah: Clinton Does '90 Percent' Israel's Bidding

NC1801070394 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 0530 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] 'Allamah Sayyid Husayn Fadlallah has said that President Hafiz al-Asad has a clear strategy and is not one of those who take their cue from the U.S. President. Fadlallah said Clinton is doing 90 percent of Israel's bidding in the region; the United States has no Middle East policy, but merely follows Israel's. So, we do not believe Clinton would do much for the oppressed Arabs and Palestinians.

Al-Asad, Clinton Meet in Geneva 16 Jan

JN1601104694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1015 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton began their meeting in the conference hall at the Geneva Intercontinental Hotel at 1000 [as heard] Geneva time today.

Attending on the Syrian side are Dr. 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Kasm, head of the National Security Office, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Faruq al-Shar'. For the U.S. side, the meeting is attended by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, National Security Adviser Anthony Lake, and Middle East Peace Coordinator Dennis Ross.

Shortly before their meeting, Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton met outside the conference hall and shook hands in their first direct introduction to each other. They then exchanged cordialities. Reporters asked President Hafiz al-Asad if he was pleased about this meeting with President Clinton. The president said: I am glad to meet with President Clinton and for us to be here in Geneva to work for a just and comprehensive peace in our region.

Leaders Hold News Conference

JN1601171094 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1513 GMT 16 Jan 94

[News conference by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton in Geneva with unidentified reporters; Clinton speaks in English—live]

[Text] [al-Asad] At the conclusion of the important and constructive talks today between President Clinton and me, I would like to express my deep satisfaction with what these talks reflected in terms of the United States' determination to do its best in order to get the peace process to its aspired target—the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the region by implementing Security Council Resolutions No. 242, 338, and 425 and the land-for-peace principle. In this regard, I believe that despite the great importance that President Clinton attaches to domestic affairs in his country, he has given special attention as a full partner and honest broker in order to help the parties achieve a comprehensive peace that concerns not only the people of the region, but all world nations.

Today's meeting between me and President Clinton crowned a series of correspondences and telephone calls between us during the last year. I hope that our meeting today will contribute to achieving the aspirations of the region's peoples that this new year be a year for the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace that puts an end to the tragedies of violence and wars from which these peoples have been suffering for several decades.

During our meeting, I had the opportunity to emphasize to President Clinton Syria's firm commitment to the bases and principles of the peace process and our strong faith that peace cannot be real and lasting unless it its comprehensive and based on the principles of international legitimacy and justice. This means serious work for a just solution on all tracks. Current and historical evidence proves that separate peace deals and partial solutions cannot secure a real peace in the region. In this regard, I would like to express my satisfaction that President Clinton is personally committed to the objective of a comprehensive peace. Accordingly, we agreed to work together in order to render successful the efforts aimed at putting an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and reach a comprehensive and real peace that enables the region's peoples to concentrate on their development, progress, and prosperity.

This meeting also gave us the opportunity to exchange views on a number of issues, including those related to bilateral relations, and we agreed that the noble objective we are working for together requires a qualitative step toward better relations. We also discussed issues related to the regional situation and all that would contribute to security and stability in the Middle East.

Syria seeks a just and comprehensive peace with Israel as a strategic option that guarantees Arab rights, terminates the Israeli occupation, and enables all the region's peoples to live in peace, safety, and dignity. We fought honorably, negotiate honorably, and make peace honorably. We want an honorable peace for our people and for hundreds of thousands of those who sacrificed their lives in defense of the homeland and its rights. There is almost no house in Syria that has not lost a martyr in defense of the homeland, nation, and Arab rights. For the sake of all those and for the sake of their sons and families, we want the peace of the brave, a real peace that thrives, continues, guarantees the interests of all, and gives rights to their owners. If the leaders of Israel have enough courage to respond to such a peace, a new era of security and stability and normal peaceful relations among all will emerge in the region. Thank you. [applause]

[Clinton] In pursuit of that priority I have always viewed Syria's involvement as critical. That is why from the outset of our administration, I have engaged President al-Asad in a regular correspondence by telephone and letter, and why I am now pleased to have had this opportunity to hear personally President al-Asad's views about how best to make this a year of [words indistinct] to produce real peace. The accord between Israel and the PLO marks a first step to lay the groundwork for a solution to the Palestinian problem. I have said that I believe Syria to be the key and that its role is critical for achieving a true and lasting peace between Israel and its neighbors. As you have heard, President al-Asad shares with me the goal of achieving a comprehensive peace with Israel and peaceful relations between the neighbors. Israel and Syria will have to make crucial decisions to achieve peace. Hence, al-Asad's call for a peace of the brave. You have heard him say that now, and I support this. Today we worked together to bring the peace talks that began in Madrid two years ago to a successful

conclusion. There are important problems that need to be solved. There are problems related to withdrawal, peace, and security. We will try to solve the issues that are connected with peace, withdrawal, and security. But I am confident that we have laid the foundations for real progress. The heads of delegations will begin again talks in Washington next week. We also discussed the state of relations between the United States and Syria and agreed on the desirability of improving them. This requires honestly addressing the problems in our relationship. Accordingly, we have instructed the secretary of state and the Syrian foreign minister to establish a mechanism to address these issues in detail and openly. For too long, the Middle East has been denied the benefits of peace, and yet it is within our power to create the conditions that will enable Israeli and Arab—Muslim, Christian, and Jew—to live together in peace. Today's meeting was an important step for fulfilling that vision. We have a lot of work to do, but we are closer to our goal. Thank you. [applause]

[Reporter, in English] Mr. President: Do you feel that you have a firm commitment from President al-Asad to normalize relations with Israel, and by that I mean open borders, free trade, and diplomatic relations?

[Clinton] The short answer is yes. I believe that President al-Asad has made a clear, forthright and very important statement on normal, peaceful relations now. In order to achieve those relations, a peace agreement has to be negotiated in good faith and carried out. But this is an important statement, the first time that there has been a clear expression that there will be a possibility of that sort of relationship.

[Reporter, in Arabic] Mr. President: All the separate agreements have proved a failure, the most notable examples being the 17 May agreement in Lebanon and the Gaza-Jericho accord. UN resolutions on Iraq have been applied firmly. To date, Resolution 425 on Lebanon remains unenforced. When will we see a commitment to UN Resolutions, including 425?

[Clinton] First of all, as to the specifics of the implementation, that will be part of the process of negotiation. But let me answer the first, and more important question, I think. I think all the parties in this process recognize that it cannot succeed unless all the tracks are brought to a successful conclusion. That is, I think President al-Asad was very eloquent in our meeting today about the question of Lebanon, and Jordan, for that matter, in saying that even Syria may feel fully satisfied with its differences with Israel if they could be worked out, there would still have to be a comprehensive peace in which the issues affecting Lebanon, the issues affecting Jordan, and the issues relating to the PLO would, in addition to the Syrian issues, would all be resolved. We are all committed to that.

[Reporter, in English] Mr. al-Asad. President Clinton is the fifth, the fourth American President you're meeting now. Do you think you can afford to wait for a fifth one or have you decided to sign the peace now?

[Al-Asad] Yes. We are ready to sign peace now.

[Reporter, in English] President Clinton. Beyond the broad assurances that you and President al-Asad have spoken of here about the willingness to seek peace and to negotiate it. Do you have, Sir, as a result of these meetings, any of the kinds of specific detailed concessions or a sense of willingness to make concessions that might make a successful negotiation possible? And if so, can you tell us in what areas they are?

[Clinton] Well, as you know, I have a very strong conviction that the specifics of this agreement will have to be negotiated by the parties themselves. And even though I have in mind several things, I think that it is very important that those of us who are trying to facilitate these discussions not discuss the details of them. The parties are going to have to work that out.

Let me say that an indication has been given here by the very important statement that President al-Asad has already made, stating clearly that it is time to end the conflict with Israel, make peace with Israel, that peace can be, should lead to normal and peaceful relations. I would hope that this would provoke a positive response in Israel and that the parties would get together and work these details out. That is not for the United States to dictate.

[Reporter, in Arabic] President Clinton. Despite the peace talks since the Madrid conference, Israel continues to build settlements in the occupied Arab territories which, according to all international standards, are considered illegitimate and a violation of UN resolutions. Moreover, at a time when Syria signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and has demanded over the years that the Middle East be a region free of weapons of mass destruction—nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons—Israel still refuses to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and continues to stockpile weapons. Mr. President, do you not think that these Israeli stands and practices contradict the concept of peace for which you are working? Thank you.

[Clinton] First, sir, I believe the question of settlements in disputed areas is one of the things that clearly will have to be resolved in connection with this peace process consistent with United Nations resolutions and the concept of territory for peace. I said that in my opening statement. I expect that to work, to be worked through.

Secondly, on the question of weapons, I believe the best chance we have to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction, that includes not only nuclear but also biological and chemical weapons, and indeed to slow the sophisticated conventional arms race in the Middle East is to finish this peace process successfully. I think that is, as a practical matter, the only way to do it. And we're going to, the United States will work as hard as we can toward that objective.

[Reporter, in English] President al-Asad: Are you clearly stating unequivocally today that in exchange for a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, Syria would be prepared to establish normal diplomatic relations with Israel, including open borders, including tourism, the same kind of peace treaty that Israel established with Egypt?

[Al-Asad] All of us, foremost the United States and President Clinton, are trying to make peace comprehensive in order to make it lasting and just. Within this framework, we are trying to achieve a real peace that will secure rights for everyone and secure a stable life for everyone. In such a solution, all the region's peoples, as well as all the world's nations, have an interest. President Clinton and I were in agreement regarding our views. We will respond to peace requirements. This matter, as you know, is a subject to be tackled at the negotiating table, not during this conference.

[Reporter, in Arabic] This question is posed to President Clinton: The United States has proposed itself as a full partner and an honest broker. Syria welcomed this and cooperated with this for the sake of a peace process that is of concern to the entire world. Despite this, the United States still deals with Syria in a way which is different from the way it deals with Israel, particularly in the field of financial and military aid. What is your explanation of this? Thank you.

[Clinton] [words indistinct] ... with Syria over a number of issues, including our differences over questions relating to certain groups, PKK [Kurdish Workers Party], Hizballah, the Jibril group [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command], others, other issues. We talked about these differences for about an hour today without any view toward trying to resolve them. We agreed on two things, and I think this is very important. One is that if we can maintain one another's confidence working toward a peaceful solution in the Middle East, that that would do a great deal for our bilateral relations and for a better future. And the second is that we needed to have a process that had integrity, established by the secretary of state and the Syrian foreign minister. That would go beyond public exchanges to a very specific delineation of the differences between us and an honest effort to resolve them or to make progress on them. So, sir, I think the best answer to your question is that we think that the progress perhaps can be made. We've set up a mechanism to deal honestly with the differences between us, and we believe maintaining each other's confidence by a good-faith effort in the Middle East peace process is the most important thing we can do at this moment in our history.

[Reporter, in English] Mr. President: If the subject is so close to your heart, but you evaded answering whether you thought that Israel could sign a Non-Proliferation Treaty, my real question is: Did you discuss and set a timetable for Israeli and Syrian troops to come out of Lebanon?

[Clinton] We did not have any discussions today about the details of any face of the Middle East peace process because the other parties are not here present, and it would not have been an appropriate thing to do.

[Reporter, in Arabic] [words indistinct]

[Clinton, interrupting] Excuse me, I got one of those helpful little hands from one of my staff members down here. I apologize to interrupt you. I want to be perfectly forthright because I don't want to leave a false impression that might be adversely interpreted against President al-Asad. We did discuss the importance of having the Lebanese peace process go on parallel to the Israeli-Syrian process. I reaffirm my support for the al-Ta'if accord, and President al-Asad agrees that there should be a successful conclusion of a peace process which left Lebanon free and independent as a nation. So, there was no difference between us on the objective. And I didn't want anything I said to be read unfairly against him on that score. We actually, I think, reached complete meeting of the mind.

[Reporter, in English] In my interview with you, on 13 September at the White House, you called for a bigger Syrian role in the peace process, and you called personally on His Excellency President al-Asad to play a personal role in forging ahead a breakthrough in the peace process. Now that you've met President al-Asad face to face for the first time, what is your impression about President al-Asad? And how do you view his personal role in achieving that breakthrough?

[Clinton] Well, first of all, you know I had heard a lot about President al-Asad's legendary stamina in these meetings. [laughter] And when we called a break four hours and 20 minutes into our meeting, I can tell you that his reputation does not exceed the reality. He deserves every bit of it. Secondly, we had the opportunity, because we did talk for so long, we had the opportunity to exchange not only our views about the issues in play at present but also I had the opportunity to learn President al-Asad's perspective over a period exceeding 20 years now on some of these issues. And it reinforced my belief, as expressed in September, that there would be no comprehensive peace in the Middle East unless he were willing to take a leadership role, and that he has decided to take the risks that all these leaders, if they really want peace, are going to have to take. And so, I guess, I would have to say that that is the most important thing to me. The thing that was most impressive, I believe, that he is committed to trying to work through this as quickly as possible, and I think others will see that commitment and will respond in an appropriate way.

[Reporter, in Arabic] President Clinton, if peace is an international need, and the U.S. Administration is seriously seeking to achieve it, providing that it is also a U.S., Israeli, and Syrian need, then why does the peace process stumble every now and then? How will the U.S. Administration, taking into consideration that it is the

most important cosponsor, tackle the obstacles that might emerge on the road in the future? Thank you.

[Clinton] Of course, it stumbles every now and then because it's difficult to do. If it were easy to do, it would have been done before. The parties have been at odds with each other for a long time, there was a lot of mistrust to overcome, there are a lot of details to be worked out. And, I think whenever there is any ambiguity at all, or uncertainty, then that is likely to lead to other problems down the road. So, there are lots of reasons why it happens. What the United States is trying to do is to take advantage of what I think is an appropriate moment in history, where you have leaders committed to getting this done—leaders who understand that the interests of their people will be served over the long run by comprehensive peace. And so what we can do, I think, is to try to keep the process going, keep the trust level up among the parties, try to be an honest broker and work through the problems, and when these difficulties do arise, as they have as you implied in the aftermath of the PLO-Israel accord, to try to help and work through them as quickly as possible and get things back on track.

[Reporter, in English] Thank you.

[Clinton] Thank you very much.

Al-Asad Meets With Stich, UN's Butrus-Ghali

JN1501200894 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] At 1700 today, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received at his place of residence Otto Stich, president of the Swiss Confederation, the Swiss foreign minister, the governor of Geneva, and the Swiss ambassador in Damascus. Dr. 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Kasm, head of the National Security Office, and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' attended the meeting.

President Stich welcomed His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad by saying that he is happy and Switzerland is proud to receive his excellency the president for the third time. He said he greatly values the efforts his excellency the president has exerted to establish peace in the Middle East.

President al-Asad thanked President Stich for the warm welcome he was accorded and emphasized Syria's work for a just and comprehensive peace in the region. He said that he valued Switzerland's role in working for peace.

At 1900 today, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali. Dr. 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Kasm, head of the National Security Office, and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' attended the meeting. The two sides reviewed several international issues and the Middle East peace process. [passage omitted]

President al-Asad and Clinton will hold a joint news conference at the end of the talks in the Intercontinental Hotel. [passage omitted]

Damascus Radio will carry live the joint news conference between Presidents Al-Asad and Clinton. Syrian Television will also carry live the proceedings of the news conference from Geneva. [passage omitted]

Al-Shar' Briefs Cabinet on Summit's 'Positive Results'

JN1801141394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Excerpt] The Council of Ministers held a meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi at 1100 today. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' briefed the council on the positive results of the summit meeting between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton. The foreign minister reviewed the work and results of the summit as well as its repercussions on the peace process, the overall situation in the region, and on Syrian-U.S. relations. Al- Shar' noted that the summit reaffirmed the need to achieve a just and comprehensive peace based on the resolutions of international legitimacy and the principle of exchanging land for peace.

The Council of Ministers expressed its great appreciation of and pride in the wise and courageous leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad and his pan-Arab stands embodied in the historic Geneva meeting. [passage omitted]

Papers Praise Outcome of Geneva Summit

JN1801115194 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Press review]

[Text] Under the headline "The Policy of Deceit and Procrastination Conflicts With the World Community's Will," AL-BA'TH writes: Everyone agrees that the Geneva summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton has produced very positive results that will give a strong boost to help the peace process move toward its objectives to achieve the just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The paper adds: Geneva summit confirmed that peace can be genuine only if it is comprehensive and based on the UN resolutions and the principles of international legitimacy and justice.

AL-BA'TH stresses that the U.S. Administration would not have convened the Geneva summit if it were not convinced of the importance of the Syria role in the peace process; a role which President Clinton said is crucial to achieve a genuine peace in the Middle East.

The paper adds: Political quarters and the media agree that the Geneva summit undoubtedly dotted the i's and crossed the t's to ensure a new launch for the peace

process. This is particularly the case when leader al-Asad reaffirmed Syria's certain and firm determination to establish a just and comprehensive peace on all tracks.

The paper stresses that the lessons of ancient and contemporary history, as emphasized by President al-Asad, confirm that separate peace and partial solution cannot guarantee a genuine peace. Leader al-Asad very clearly expressed Syria's firm belief that the just and comprehensive peace is a necessity for everyone when he said: We seek a just and comprehensive peace as a strategic option that guarantees Arab rights, terminates the Israeli occupation, and enables all the region's peoples to live in peace, security, and dignity.

For his part, U.S. President Clinton was clear in his support of President Hafiz al-Asad's view on the peace process when the U.S. President publicly acknowledged three matters raised by President al-Asad: Syria's principal role, which Clinton considered a key to peace; that the peaceful settlement should be comprehensive and not partial; and his administration's desire to push forward the Syrian-U.S. relations to a new, more important level.

AL-BA'TH concludes by saying: The Geneva summit has provided a new and rare opportunity to find a just and comprehensive peace. Israel, as the media and political quarters feel, should make a clear and candid stand away from the methods of deceit and procrastination which it pursues to avoid the dues of the just and comprehensive peace.

Within the same context, AL-THAWRAH says in a commentary: The world was right when it considered Presidents al-Asad-Clinton Geneva summit a historic event that will produce an equally important results. From the statements made by President Hafiz a-Asad and Bill Clinton, the world has learned again that the Syria's position on peace and the peace process is unequivocal; it is a clear position, based on objective principles and absolute commitment to the foundations of the peace process and the Madrid formula, as well as the pertinent resolutions of international legitimacy and the principle of land for peace.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The emphasis laid by the Geneva summit on the importance of the comprehensive peace and the achievement of that peace banks on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of land for peace and returning to Lebanon its occupied southern part.

AL-THAWRAH stresses that this emphasis will help put the peace process back on its normal course, provided that Israel abandons the policy of intransigence and provided that, as President al-Asad has said, the Israeli rulers show enough courage to respond favorably to a genuine peace based on justice and comprehensiveness.

The paper adds: With the Geneva summit, the Arab position has scored a historic triumph represented by this summit's results and contribution toward affirming the credibility of the Arab position, guaranteeing the rights of all Arabs, and exposing the evasive nature of the Israeli policy. This would not have been possible without President al-Asad's extraordinary negotiating skills, his ability to convince others of the justness of the Arab causes, and an unlimited ability to represent Arabs and protect their national rights.

AL-THAWRAH concludes by saying: Activating the peace process, which is the main objective of the Geneva summit, was a subject of clear and full agreement between the summiteers. The statements by Presidents al-Asad and Clinton confirmed the importance of the comprehensive peace and the U.S. President stressed the importance of Syria's crucial role in peace and the peace process.

On the same subject, and under the headline "Summit of Success," TISHRIN says in an editorial: President Hafiz al-Asad did not need more political fame or credit or more spotlights when he went to Geneva. With his persistent efforts and principled positions and wisdom, he managed to win such things before Geneva. Despite the distorted balance of powers in the world and despite the deteriorating Arab situation, al-Asad managed to make the world acknowledge Syria's pioneering role in the region and the peace process.

The paper adds: If it were not for al-Asad, the summit would not have been convened in the first place. Nor would the summit have been convened on the basis of a precise parity between the two parties.

The paper adds: Syria's standing was high before the Geneva summit. It grew even bigger after the summit. In his statement, President Clinton said more than once that Syria has a crucial role in the region and that it would not be possible to achieve peace in the region without Damascus or President Hafiz al-Asad, who insists on playing a leading role in the peace process.

The paper stresses that the Geneva summit has achieved a major success because it gave credibility to the thesis of the just and comprehensive peace and opened a new chapter in relations between Damascus and Washington.

The paper notes that the summit has strengthened the world's confidence in Syria's central and crucial role in the region and foiled all attempts to encroach on Syria's weight and positions.

The paper notes that the summit provided a valuable opportunity to build ties of mutual confidence and respect between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton.

TISHRIN concludes by saying: President al-Asad went to Geneva carrying the burden of the entire Arab cause. He returned with his head high because he protected the nation's dignity, strengthened its self-confidence, and revived its hopes in the possibility of regaining its usurped rights.

Israel Urged To Respond to 'Voice of Peace'

JN1701142994 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0845 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Damascus, 17 Jan (SANA)—The newspaper TISHRIN has asserted that the summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton has revived hopes for peace and shown the road to stability in the Middle East and the possibility of establishing genuine, firm, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region.

In its editorial today, the paper says that establishing a firm, durable peace in the Middle East does not depend on Syria alone. Israel must also show a response, after the United States has pledged to make tireless efforts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict in line with the resolutions of international legitimacy.

The paper asks Israel to make the "difficult decisions" that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has often spoken about. It also urges Israel to end aggression and occupation because they contradict all principles and values of civilized humanity and because peace and occupation can never coexist.

AL-BA'TH says that the Geneva summit has proven beyond doubt that President al-Asad cares for Arab rights and truly seeks a just and comprehensive peace in this region.

In its editorial today, the paper adds that this truly embodies the constants of an approach and way of thinking that has never considered relinquishing any rights.

The paper questions Israel's intransigent position at a time when the Geneva summit has emphasized the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace, which is now a pressing international demand for our region.

AL-BA'TH concludes: Now that the Geneva summit is over, eyes will turn toward what the U.S. Administration will do to fulfill its commitments, namely, working to achieve genuine peace in the region based on international resolutions and the land-for-peace principle.

In its commentary today, AL-THAWRAH says that the Geneva summit has resuscitated the peace process on the foundations on which it was originally launched, supported by an across-the-board Arab and international acknowledgment of Syria's central, decisive role in the region and in the peace process.

The paper thinks that the positive, honorable results of the Geneva summit have revived hopes for achieving a just and comprehensive peace in line with the resolutions of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle.

AL-THAWRAH asserts that Israel's response to a just and comprehensive peace and its requirements will herald a new era in the region.

The paper concludes: It is the moment of truth. Peace and occupation can not coexist. This is an important result of the Geneva summit that will turn into concrete reality if Israel responds to the voice of peace that has again rung out loud from Geneva.

Minister on Anti-Clinton 'Zionist' Defamation Bids

JN1501133194 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Sana' al-Imam dispatch from Damascus]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] On the eve of the summit, Syrian Information Minister Muhammad Salman alluded to the pressures started by the Zionist to belittle the importance of this summit. Salman said that the sudden revelations about scandals to harm the person of President Clinton have suddenly surfaced in the defamation media on the eve of the summit and are merely open operations of blackmail aimed at intimidating the U.S. President and forcing him to remain committed to the Israeli logic during his talks with President al-Asad, as the Syrian minister put it.

Khaddam Denies Syrian 'Ambitions' in Lebanon

PM1701104794 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 Jan 94 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Khaddam: Syria Has No Ambitions. Stability Extricates Lebanon from Intensive Care"]

[Text] Beirut, AL-HAYAH—Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam has said that "Lebanon can recover its economic role and prosperity within a short period if it has complete stability coupled with the existence of a state supported by everyone." He added: "Lebanon is still in intensive care and will not be able to be moved from it unless stability is achieved. And the Lebanese people's interests lie in the building of a strong and capable state." He stressed that "Syria has no ambitions in Lebanon."

Khaddam was speaking to a delegation from the [Lebanese] Chamber of Commerce and the Lebanese Banks Association headed by 'Adnan al-Qassar, which visited Damascus the day before yesterday [12 January] at the invitation of the Syrian Chambers of Commerce and Industry Federation to discuss ways of reinforcing economic relations between the two countries in the implementation of brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination.

The Syrian vice president pointed out that "there are many things which prompt the Lebanese and the Syrians to cooperate. And if peace is established in the region, Israel's aim will be to control economic, tourist, and other resources; the Arabs will become a consumer market for it; and it will become an agent for the big

economic establishments. In the West there are no friendships, but interests, and the quarter close to the West's interests is Israel."

Khaddam said that "the big loser from that will be those who have money and Lebanon, because Lebanon is the most competitive country, and if Israel hits this center, the scene will become vacant for it. This is why attempts to strain the situation in Lebanon cannot be excluded from this context."

He said: "But if peace is not established in the region, the world economic situation is moving toward forming blocs and economic groupings, while our problem in the Arab states is that we behave as though each state is a world superpower. If we had established a common Arab market when the idea first emerged, we would have attained unity by now. And if Lebanon and Syria can proceed together—even through a modest experiment—in this connection, this would serve the interests of the two countries and the other Arab states. We are open to anything that achieves this aim."

He added that "Syria has achieved major advances in 25 years, even in the petroleum field, because we know what we are doing and what we are going to achieve. We have no ambitions in Lebanon. We must take the interests of the two countries into account and act on that basis. Our common interests are in our Arab affiliation. If we do not correct our relations—political and economic—there will be no Arab homeland."

He pointed out that "Lebanon can recover its status and prosperity quickly, because of the Lebanese people's flexibility and broad experience. But that cannot be achieved without the existence of a state. This state cannot be brought about unless everyone contributes to bolstering it. There are attempts to disrupt the situation in Lebanon. Recent security bombings are part of these attempts. In the end they all serve Israel's interests. Lebanon is still in intensive care, and today we see in it for the first time a serious attempt to build a state and enable the institutions to play their roles. The Lebanese people's interests lie in building a strong and capable state. If Lebanon does not have the stability, it will not be able to move out of intensive care."

He stressed "bolstering the Lebanese state and putting Syria's capabilities at its disposal to restore stability and begin the building stage in Lebanon." He said that "any cooperation between the private sectors in Lebanon and Syria is a national demand which we support with all our capabilities."

Qaddur Discusses Water, Peace, Other Issues

JN1701143794 Kuwait AL-RAY AL-'AMM in Arabic 13 Jan 94 p 17

[Interview with Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, by Murad Fathi in Damascus; date not given]

[Text] [Fathi] What do you make of the threats issued by Turkish officials to Syria over the water issue?

[Qaddur] There are no threats, strictly speaking. Turkey is a neighbor, and Turkish officials understand we will not bow to threats. On a government-to-government level, the two sides are interested in developing friendly relations. Some Turkish journalists, however, sometimes level charges over one issue or another. In the meantime, the Turkish Government has pointed out that these charges are not necessarily representative of its policies. Turkey is as willing as we are to improve our bilateral ties. As for the Euphrates, which originates in Turkish territory and traverses Syrian territory before it ends in Iraq, it has been an international waterway for thousands of years, on the banks of which many civilizations have flourished. In accordance with international rules regulating the use of river waters, the three countries are all rightful claimants. Hence, the existence of three-way technical committees working on the water distribution. In 1987, we reached an agreement with the Turks under which Turkey committed itself to the allocation of 500 cubic meters per second for Syria before the Ataturk Dam is filled. A clause in a protocol signed during former Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel's visit to Syria on 20 January, 1993 provided for an even greater amount than that.

[Fathi] Will Syria give assurances to Israel of a share in the water once peace in the Middle East is established?

[Qaddur] The Golan is Syrian territory. Israel has been stealing water from the Golan and south Lebanon. The Israelis are estimated to be misappropriating an annual 300 million cubic meters from the Golan, which is Syrian territory. Syria needs the water. Future water projects will try to utilize technology for optimum use of the water. This is because the water reserves are not enough to meet Syria's requirements. We have irrigation and electricity projects in the east of the country, and any shortfall in the water will result in the depopulation of the area. Syria does not have enough water to spare for Israel. As for assurances to Israel, when peace comes and Israel vacates the occupied Arab territories, mechanisms will be created to handle cooperation among the countries of the region. It is premature to talk, at this point in time, about cooperation and guarantees to Israel.

[Fathi] After the Palestinian-Israeli agreement was signed, and after the PLO violated the Arab coordination, to what extent can Arab coordination, particularly among the parties concerned with the peace process, be achieved?

[Qaddur] No doubt, this agreement caused a huge rift in the coordination among the states participating in the negotiations. We believe that the unity of Arab ranks will serve the peace process, and that any breakthrough on a single track will complicate this process and will have negative repercussions on it. This is because we are trying to establish a comprehensive and just peace. Therefore, there should be a unified Arab position. A

strong partner will make peace, but a weak one will make war. Syria always works to achieve at least the minimum requirements of the ongoing peace process.

[Fathi] Will you go to the 12th round of negotiations?

[Qaddur] We are committed to the peace process, to which we have been a party since the beginning, in accordance with the bases of the Madrid conference. These bases were agreed upon through elaborate discussions with the former U.S. Administration. Eleven rounds of talks were held, during which there was complete Arab coordination. Therefore, there has been a true orientation toward peace. Syria is still committed to coordination. However, it seems that Israel is so far unprepared for peace and is not sincere about it. Israel is behind the delay of the 12th session. It justifies this by the need for time to digest the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. In fact, Israel wants to usurp more Arab rights. We are ready to go to Washington on the condition that we receive confirmed guarantees about the achievement of progress during the next round.

[Fathi] How can progress be achieved during the next phase?

[Qaddur] If we return to the Madrid formula, we will find that the objective is to achieve a comprehensive peace on all fronts of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Madrid formula is not aimed at achieving bilateral solutions between Israeli and Arab parties. The goal is a comprehensive peace binding all parties to the conflict. This is what will end the conflict and return rights to their owners. The mechanism for attaining this goal is negotiations on all Arab tracks with Israel. The mission of the Syrian-Israeli track is to discuss the issue of the occupied Golan. Other tracks discuss other bilateral issues. The final outcome of these tracks will be a comprehensive peace. Isolating and ensnaring any Arab party into an agreement with Israel will disturb the Madrid formula and will weaken the Arab position, especially with regard to the issue of coordination. In the long run, this will not be in the service of peace.

[Fathi] What about reports of secret contacts between Syria and Israel?

[Qaddur] Peace is a noble goal, and it does not need any secret agreements. No one has to be ashamed of it. Yet, there was secrecy about the eleven rounds of the Washington talks. The problems that were discussed during the negotiations were not divulged. This was considered secrecy. Approximately 7,000 pages were written in such secrecy.

[Fathi] How do you assess the progress on the Syrian-Israeli track so far?

[Qaddur] We can say that Israel is still far away from the requirements of peace. Whenever the two delegations reach the main point, namely, total withdrawal from the Golan, the Israelis start talking about the fruits of peace. The Israelis have not shown any signs that they will withdraw from the Golan. They have not said they are ready to carry out a total withdrawal from the Golan, although they know that Syria will not relinquish any inch of its land. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 are the basis for the peace process. Israel entered the negotiations aware of this. These two resolutions stipulate Israel's withdrawal from all the territories that were occupied in 1967.

[Fathi] There is much talk about Egypt's role in the peace negotiations. How do you view that role?

[Qaddur] The Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs has said that Egypt is an Arab state and is not, as some Western papers are saying, playing the role of a mediator. Egypt is not playing the role of a mediator but is an Arab party, like Syria and other Arab parties, that is seeking peace in the region. It has more freedom than some Arab parties due to the state of its international relations. It is an Arab country and it is eager to preserve Arab rights. There is a wide-scale coordination between Syria and Egypt on the highest level, especially between President Hafiz al-Asad and President Husni Mubarak, to achieve a comprehensive and just peace. This is an aspect of the distinguished relations between the two countries.

Only 225 Jews Reported Still Without Exit Visas

NC1401204394 Paris AFP in English 1958 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Damascus, Jan 14 (AFP)—Only 225 Syrian Jews are still waiting to get exit visas from the authorities, the head of Syria's Jewish community said Friday [14 January].

Rabbi Ibrahim Hamra told AFP the authorities began issuing visas to Jews about three weeks ago, at the rate of 30 a day.

"Only 225 Syrian Jews still have not received their exit visas," he said. "We hope they will get them in the next few days."

Some 1,250 of Syria's 4,000-strong Jewish community opted to stay in Syria after Damascus agreed in 1992 to allow applicants for exit visas to leave with their families.

About 1,000 remained in Damascus, and 250 in Aleppo and al-Qamishli in the north.

Hamra said none of those who emigrated went to Israel. Almost all of them went to New York.

On Monday, Hamra said that around 110 Jews had returned after spending more than a year in the United States.

For years the United States has urged Syria to allow its Jews to leave.

Damascus previously barred families from travelling together and required individuals who did leave to put up large sums as guarantees against their return.

However, in December Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad assured US Secretary of State Warren Christopher that Damascus would speed up the issuing of exit visas for Jews.

Afghanistan

Rabbani Refuses To Resign; Jihad Declared

BK1801093494 Hong Kong AFP in English 0919 GMT 18 Jan 94

[By Terence White]

[Text] Kabul, Jan 18 (AFP)—Warring factions opposing and supporting President Borhanoddin Rabbani exchanged scores of long-range rockets and mortars in an artillery duel in eastern Kabul on Tuesday [18 Jan].

Despite the promise of a lull in hostilities due to a blanket of snow that descended on Kabul in the night, the artillery firefight continued for 90 minutes, followed by the deadly rattle of small-arms fire.

Pro-Rabbani troops are now in their 18th consecutive day of fighting against the rival Uzbek forces of ex-communist General Abdol Rashid Dostam, and his military partner Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar.

Rabbani's spokesman told AFP that the president had rejected his rival's demand for his resignation as a precondition to the cessation of the fighting.

"The president has already triumphed," said spokesman Abdol Aziz Morad, as windows in his house rattled from the shock-waves of incoming artillery bursts.

He said the coup attempt by the "Dostam militia" had failed, and that except for the two eastern bases of Bala Hissar and Maranjan Hill, Dostam forces had lost most of their strongholds in Kabul.

Morad stressed there would be no ceasefire with the Dostam forces.

"The concept of a ceasefire has no reality. A sacred war, Jihad, has been declared," he stated.

Morad reiterated Radio Kabul's message that the April 1992 general amnesty issued for Dostam's ex-communist forces had been suspended.

Morad said that captured Dostam forces would face trial in accordance with the Shariat, or Muslim religious law.

Dostam himself, Morad said, is a "killer and a criminal, who did nothing for the past 15 years except assassinate the Afghan people".

Although he blamed Dostam, former Afghan communist president Babrak Karmal, and Hekmatyar equally for the coup attempt, no Jihad has been formally declared against the prime minister's Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan] faction.

"But if Hezb stand with the Dostam militia, they will be killed in the same way as the militia will be killed," Morad said.

He said there were many honest mojahedin among the Hezb-e Eslami ranks, and that the "state" was trying to woo them over to its side.

"We are trying to split the honest Hezb from their leadership," said Morad. "It would be better if all the Hezb split from Hekmatyar."

Rabbani's camp does not recognise Hekmatyar as the country's legal prime minister. "Hekmatyar has forfeited his honour, his prestige, and the achievments of his political past," Morad said.

In Pakistan, the Hezb-e Eslami said Rabbani had lost legitimacy. A Hezb statement urged all countries not to deal with his government, saying that it did not represent the will of the Afghan people.

Battles Rage Around Kabul; Rabbani, Dostam Not To Meet

PM1401160094 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 14 Jan 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Abdallah al-Hajj and Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan: "Kabul Shelled by Rockets, Exposed to Ground Attack"]

[Excerpts] Jeddah, Peshawar—The Afghan capital and its northern suburbs yesterday witnessed battles which observers said "it never experienced during the jihad against the communists or in Afghanistan's contemporary history." The alliance opposed to President Borhanoddin Rabbani used Scud and Organ [as received] missiles to shell government positions. [passage omitted]

Afghan diplomatic sources in Saudi Arabia have told AL-HAYAH that Rabbani's condition for agreeing to a truce is for Hekmatyar to completely sever his links with the militias and the communists and hand over all the heavy weapons in his possession to the Defense Ministry. He also demanded strong guarantees from high-level circles that the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan] will not try to violate the cease-fire again or participate in any "future conspiracy to seize power" in the country.

The sources also emphasized that the Afghan presidency is not prepared at all to hold talks with Dostam and his allies. They quoted Rabbani's sources as saying that Rabbani is willing to hold general elections under international supervision, as stated in the Mecca declaration, provided that the elections be held six months after the end of the head of state's term. [passage omitted]

Cabinet Rejects Rebellion, Affirms Holy War

LD1701195194 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] A meeting of the cabinet was chaired today by Esteemed Arslan Mowlawi Rahmani, the first deputy prime minister [title as received].... [55-second break in reception]

In today's meeting the current problems of the country were comprehensively discussed and necessary decisions were taken unanimously. The following statement was approved at the meeting:

1. The recent armed rebellion that was launched by militia of the 53d Division and communists belonging to the Babrak Karmal wing in an attempt to topple the Islamic state, is condemned and rejected. Rebellion against Islamic sovereignty is considered war against God and corruption on earth.

2. Jihad declared by the head of the Islamic State of Afghanistan against atheist conspirators is affirmed.

3. Every communist belonging to Khalq-Parcham groups or other leftist organizations who proves that he is still loyal to their atheistic beliefs and launches struggle and conspiracy against the Islamic government is deprived of the privilege of general amnesty. They can be tried as apostates and traitors.

4. Every sort of foul interference, provocative action, and foul propaganda that is carried out by foreign sources is considered condemned and rejected.

5. All Islamic formations, jihadi brothers, and independent social personalities are asked to take active part in this sacred jihad to reject atheist individuals and groups.

Group of Commanders Try To End Conflict

BK1701090994 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 17 Jan 94 p 12

[Text] Peshawar—A group of 46 Afghan commanders have initiated a campaign to bring an end to the 16-day battle for Kabul.

The group, which includes well-known commanders like Manlvi Siddiqullah, Sher Alam, Anwar Khan and Karim Qarabagh, met leaders of the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan]-led Supreme Coordination Council of the Islamic Revolution of Afghanistan at Charasyab Sunday [16 Jan] to discuss peace proposals. The group, which includes several pro-Rabbani commanders, was reportedly also in touch with Rabbani and his former defence minister, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud.

The moves came amidst reports of bombing of Kabul by General Dostam's jet-fighters. Qarcebar Rahman Saeed, a Supreme Council spokesman, said Rabbani positions at Dashit-e Chamiala and in the capital were bombed. Radio Kabul, monitored in Peshawar, however, reported that Dostam's aircraft bombed civilian areas with cluster bombs. Both sides reported that there were almost no ground battles on Sunday.

According to Saeed, the delegation brought a letter from Mas'ud expressing his readiness to accept the verdict of a 15-member commission comprising three representatives each of Rabbani's Jami'at-e Eslami [Islamic Society], Hezb-e Eslami (Hekmatyar), Hezb-e Eslami (Khalis), Sayyaf's Ettehad-e Eslami-e [Islamic Union of Afghanistan] and Manlvi Mohammadi's Harekat-e Enqelab-e Eslami [Islamic Revolution Movement].

Saeed said the Council made it clear to the commanders that they would not agree to a ceasefire, but were ready to discuss Rabbani's resignation. He said a four-member delegation, including one nominee each from Hezb-e Eslami, Hezb-e Wahdat [Islamic Unity Party], Mojaddeddi's ANLF [National Liberation Front of Afghanistan] and Dostam's Junbush-e Melli Eslami, was being formed. Jami'at-e Eslami sources in Peshawar said they were unaware of Mas'ud's letter or proposal.

Saeed added that the Supreme Council welcomed Pakistan's proposal for a regional conference, though it insisted on Rabbani's resignation as a pre-condition.

Radio Kabul quoted Dr Najibollah Lafra'i as saying that Rabbani would not accept a temporary ceasefire and would not talk to Dostam's militia. He said peace talks with Hezb-e Eslami were possible provided it gave up its heavy arms, guaranteed not to fight against the government and broke its ties with Dostam.

Amir Usman, Pakistan's ambassador in Afghanistan, Sunday travelled to Jalalabad to meet the Nangarhar Shura. A Shura spokesman informed The News that the delegation told the ambassador about the difficulties faced by Afghans following Pakistan's decision to seal its border with Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, another 32 UN trucks carrying relief supplies left Peshawar for Jalalabad Sunday. The trucks carried tents, flour and UNICEF-donated medicines for the two new camps near Jalalabad.

More than 100 Pakistani lawyers in Peshawar have signed a memorandum calling on the United Nations to provide a safe passage to former Afghan president, Dr Najibollah, from war-battered Kabul. It pointed out that Dr Najibollah had stepped down as part of a UN-brokered peace plan, but was still being held at UN premises in Kabul. The memorandum said Dr Najibollah should be freed, not only to fulfill a UN obligation but also because of security problems.

Council Supports Holy War

LD1701202694 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] The press department of the presidency told the Bakhtar Information Agency that the country's president, esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, received a decision-making council [da tasmim newalo shura] of Kabul's mosques, Takia Khanas [Shiite prayer places], ulemas, and elders this afternoon.

Opening the meeting, a few verses were read out by one of the ulema and then esteemed Mawlawi Ataurrahman introduced members of the decision-making council to the esteemed president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Then, Hojjat ol-Eslam Walmoslemin Khodadad Erfani spoke about the coup attempt by a group of criminals and said:

Criminal communists once again, in collaboration with the hypocrite Golboddin, soiled their hands with the blood of the innocent and Muslim people of Afghanistan. Hekmatyar is a hypocrite element of our era who destroyed Kabul due to the existence of militia in the past. Distinction between the militia and Golboddin is now difficult to make.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Erfani also said that the Sunni and Shi'ia ulema of Afghanistan have expressed support for the declared jihad by the president of Afghanistan. He considered jihad against militia and communists as the duty of every Muslim.

Then esteemed Mawlawi Ruhani and Mawlawi Kefayatollah spoke in turn and considered jihad against the militia as a duty to God.

The esteemed president then praised the role of ulema during the era of jihad and said: It is without any doubt that, under the present conditions, the faithful ulema have taken their resolute stand. This means that the conscience of our nation is awake and your meeting is indicative of the national and religious unity of our country.

Rabbani To Follow Council's Decision

BK1801023694 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0207 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] According to a report, peace efforts are continuing to bring about a permanent cease-fire between rival factions and ways are being explored to establish a lasting peace in Afghanistan. A group of 43 prominent commanders belonging to various Afghan groups met President Borhanoddin Rabbani in the suburbs of Kabul yesterday. They reviewed all aspects of the current fighting and discussed the possibilities of a dialogue among rival factions for lasting peace.

President Rabbani told the commanders that a representative council comprising all provinces will be set up which will be empowered to make a final decision about the future structure of the country. According to the AFGHAN ISLAMIC NEWS AGENCY, the Afghan president said he will resign if directed by the council to do so.

Rabbani Chairs Cabinet Meeting on Military

LD1601180994 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani chaired a session of the cabinet today. The Afghan president's press department told the Bakhtar Information Agency that opening the meeting, cabinet members presented reports concerning problems and difficulties in the work of some ministries. Then the esteemed president spoke in detail about the country's military situation and recent developments as well as about the conspiratorial measures and coup d'etat launched by the Golboddin-Dostam militia.

The cabinet meeting made fundamental and important decisions about the current situation in the country.

Saudi King Warned by Hezb-e Eslami Leader

BK1701144694 Hong Kong AFP in English 1432 GMT 17 Jan 94

[By Terence White]

[Excerpts] Kabul, Jan 17 (AFP)—The first relief convoy of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in nearly three weeks arrived in Kabul on Monday, delivering 20 tonnes of medical supplies to the besieged city.

The supplies come at a crucial time as Kabul's hospitals and clinics reported at the weekend that nearly 6,000 people had been treated for wounds sustained in fighting between troops loyal to Afghan Government troops and mojahedin under ex-communist general Abdol Rashid Dostam.

The convoy, consisting of seven vehicles, made it to the Afghan capital under a light dusting of snow and the sporadic exchange of small arms fire and artillery bombardments around the city. [passage omitted]

The Red Cross vehicles were able to make the dangerous overland journey from the Pakistan border to the capital because of good relations with the warring factions, said Kabul's Red Cross chief Peter Stocker.

"Through our humanitarian work, carried out both inside and outside Kabul, we have reliable contacts enabling us to obtain security guarantees," Stocker said.

The Red Cross convoy brought with it badly needed antibiotics, dressings and general medicines.

Volunteer workers of the Afghan Red Crescent Society unloaded the medical supplies in Kabul, which will be distributed to the 23 hospitals and clinics in and around the capital which are supported by the ICRC.

With the arrival of winter, the arrival of the convoy, which included four land cruisers, was welcomed as a valuable asset to the ICRC here, enabling the organization to expand its operations to cope with the fighting now in its 17th day.

The Red Cross also evacuated seven foreigners from Kabul by road Monday, including six Indonesians, among them three children aged 12 and under, and a German businessman who was said to represent a satellite-telephone company.

Meanwhile, in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar, the powerful Hezb-e Eslami faction, which has been fighting the government alongside Dostam's forces,

accused Saudi Arabian intelligence Monday of maligning its leader Golboddin Hekmatyar.

Hekmatyar, who is also prime minister, has long been at odds with President Borhanoddin Rabbani and his ally and former defense minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud.

Hezb leader Nawab Salim in a statement advised Saudi Arabia's King Fahd to "bridle" his intelligence and "enslaved media" and stop "interferring" in Afghanistan's internal affairs.

The statement said the Saudi regime was propagating "fake fatwas," or religious rulings, against the Coordination Council of Islamic Revolution (CCIR), which includes Hezb, Dostam's Junbish movement and other mojahedin groups.

Official Notes Government's Position on Peace

LD1701205694 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 0230 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Afghanistan welcomes all efforts to bring about a permanent peace. Dr. Najibollah Lefrai, state minister in foreign affairs, told a Bakhtar Information Agency that an Afghan special envoy, who has recently gone to Pakistan, has delivered a message from the Afghan president to Pakistan's president at a meeting. They talked about a permanent peace and explained our principled stand.

Dr. Lefrai said the position taken by Afghanistan has not changed. The conspirators should surrender their heavy weapons. The Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan] lead by Golboddin Hekmatyar should give guarantees of no more war against the state.

India

Spokesman Comments on Moscow Nuclear Declaration

BK1501155694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] India today reiterated its stand that there is need to alter the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] as it is discriminatory in its present form. Reacting to the U.S.-Russia joint declaration issued in Moscow yesterday at the end of the summit talks, New Delhi perceives that the basic orientation of the declaration echoed the objectives emphasized by India at the United Nations.

A statement issued by the External Affairs Ministry spokesman said that while India wants objectives of comprehensive test ban pursued expeditiously within a specified timeframe, it should be applicable to all members of the international community. In view of this, New Delhi has pursued confidence building measures with its neighbors and participated in a series of bilateral discussions with different countries. However, as far as a suggestion of the Moscow declaration that the NPT should be extended indefinitely and unconditionally in the present form, New Delhi is of the view that it needs to be altered on nondiscriminatory lines. It should take into account international developments of the last three decades and the imperative necessity for complete disarmament to end all weapons of mass destruction.

The declaration issued after the talks between Mr. Bill Clinton and Mr. Boris Yeltsin said that the two countries will support efforts to set up a multilateral forum to deal with nonproliferation problems in South Asia. It also called upon India and Pakistan to join the treaty banning nuclear tests and the proposed convention on banning the production of materials for nuclear arms.

Rao Opens Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminar

BK1701103694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] The sixth Commonwealth parliamentary seminar opened in New Delhi today with a call for refining the system. Inaugurating the seminar, the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, said no country can afford complacency about the drawbacks of the system though there is room for satisfaction. He said parliaments have to adapt themselves with the pace of the growing change in contemporary society. It is the will of the people and, therefore, it should articulate their aspirations. He said parliamentary democracy will succeed when it addresses the agenda of the nation. Listing the recent steps taken in India, Mr. Rao said several parliamentary committees have been formed to ensure accountability of the executive. Any Indian parliament member can now identify the urgent needs of the people of his constituency and suggest schemes up to one crore rupees. Mr. Rao also said that parliament and press should complement each other. Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Rao called upon parliamentarians to recall the face of the poorest man they met ever and ask whether the steps they plan are going to benefit him.

Welcoming the delegates, the Lok Sabha speaker, Mr. Shivraj Patil, emphasized the need to discover devices to cope with numerous problems faced by the people. While the parliamentary system works on the basis of majority's views it will become less productive if the aspirations of the minority are neglected. Mr. Patil also called for striking a balance to make multiparty democracy meaningful.

The deputy chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, Dr. Najma Heptulla, emphasized the need for stability of a parliamentary system domestically to ensure the stability of the world order.

The seminar will discuss among other things the need to reform parliamentary system and the roles of presiding officers and the opposition. The nine-day seminar is being attended by a number of delegates from home and abroad including the former speaker of the House of Commons of Britain, Lord (Wheteral).

Later, participating in a discussion on parliamentary system in India, the secretary general of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association [CPA], Mr. Arthur (Donahue), commended India's democratic system. He said the CPA is taking steps to monitor the forthcoming elections in South Africa. Former union minister and Janata Dal leader, Mr. I.K. Gujral, in his speech said Indian parliament, by and large, has ensured accountability of the government to the people.

University Name Decision Prompts Violence

BK1501095594 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] In Maharashtra, stray incidents of stone pelting and arson at various places in Marathwada Division were reported after the announcement of the renaming of the Marathwada University after Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The police fired in the air at (Shaksarpimpri) in Bidh District where an irate mob set fire to eight hutments. In Jalna District, the mob tried to set fire the Sarwari Railway Station. Curfew was imposed in Manwat, Sailu, and Pakri towns in Parbhani District as a precautionary measure. The situation is reported to be under control.

In Andhra Pradesh, Sarvari station of (Manwar-Purna) section of Hyderabad Division of South Central Railway was burnt last night by agitators suspected to be connected with the renaming of Marathwada University. In the same section between (Manmand-Palegaon), concrete slippers were kept on the track by miscreants blocking rail traffic. Pangra bridge between Balda and Seri station of (Akola-Purna) sections was set on fire by agitators. As a precautionary measure, trains have been regulated and diverted on this section. Railway Protection Force is protecting the disturbed area.

Meanwhile, renaming of Marathwada Biddyapit [University] in Maharashtra as Doctor Baba Saheb Amedkar Biddyapit has been widely welcomed. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has congratulated the Maharashtra government for the decision and said the renaming will solve all disputes in Marathwada and elsewhere. Various groups of the Republican Party also hailed the decision and described it as a progressive step. The CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist], the CPI [Communist Party of India] and the Janata Dal have also welcomed the decision.

Hindu, Buddhist Temples Attacked

BK1701163094 Hong Kong AFP in English 1243 GMT 17 Jan 94

[By Madhu Nainan]

[Text] Bombay, Jan 17 (AFP)—Police braced for more trouble Monday [17 Jan] in Maharashtra as a militant Hindu leader planned to tour areas of the state hit by rioting over the renaming of a university after a crusader of India's untouchables.

Sporadic violence continued for a third day in eight of the western state's 30 districts where arson and rioting snowballed after the Maharashtra administration renamed a university after the leader of low-caste Hindus.

High-caste Hindus outraged by the move on Monday set ablaze an engineering workshop, a dam site and several schools in Parbani district and torched a government veterinary hospital in Jalna district, witnesses said.

The attackers hurled rocks at state buses and private cars, forcing vehicles off the roads. Several Hindu and Buddhist temples also came under attack as tension rose in the eight districts torn by caste-strife, witnesses said.

Train and bus services remained disrupted because of attacks by upper-caste Hindus protesting the renaming of Marathwada university after Baba Sahib Ambedkar, leader of the socially-oppressed low-caste Hindus.

Police stepped up patrols to prevent violence from spilling into new areas.

Police also prepared to block a visit later Monday by Hindu fundamentalist leader Bal Thackeray to the city of Aurangabad, site of the rechristened university.

Thackeray is the leader of the Shiv Sena, whose members have been at the forefront of the violence which erupted Friday [14 Jan] after Maharashtra chief minister Sharad Pawar renamed the university.

Police said they had blocked all entry points to Aurangabad to ensure that Thackeray does not reach the city. They have banned the visit by the firebrand Hindu leader, amid fears it would spark large-scale unrest.

"Nobody is above the law," senior police officer Mahesh Narayan Singh said when asked whether Thackeray would be arrested. He also asserted that there was no violence on Monday in Marathwada district.

On Sunday, Shiv Sena militants and upper-caste Hindus torched a veterinary hospital, a police station, two schools and a Dalit shanty town and attacked government buses and offices in Marathwada.

No casualties were reported in the attacks.

Shiv Sena sources said Thackeray plans to lead a rally Tuesday in Aurangabad to protest the renaming of Marathwada university after the author of the Indian constitution.

Ambedkar is lionised by lower-caste Hindus, who are called Dalits or "downtrodden"—those at the lowest rung of the Hindu caste ladder.

If Thackeray is arrested, Shiv Sena activists would fan out into villages to carry out "disruptive activities," sources in his party said.

A journalist meanwhile swallowed poison and died in the town of Yawat Mal on Sunday [16 Jan], leaving

behind a suicide note that said he was taking his life to protest at the renaming of the university.

Vinod Gudge was the first person to commit suicide to protest the renaming.

Another protestor set himself on fire in Beed district but survived with burns to 80 percent of his body, the MAHRASHTRA TIMES said.

Five "Dalits" had committed suicide to force the renaming of the university.

The outbreak of inter-caste violence is India's worst since 1990, when the then premier, V.P Singh, hiked job quotas for the lower castes.

Iran

Commentaries View Clinton-al-Asad Summit

Syria Seen Holding 'Winning Cards'

NC1601184894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] In Geneva, Clinton will seek to persuade President Hafiz al-Asad to enlarge Syria's participation in the Middle East peace process. Room for U.S. maneuver in this regard is limited in view of Washington's knowledge of the nature of previous Syrian stances. These called for total and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights before taking one step on the path of normalizing relations with the Zionist enemy.

There is not the least doubt that Syria holds winning political cards. Although Clinton is likely to give President al-Asad other privileges, setting forth numerous options, Damascus will not discard its winning cards in the hope of obtaining such privileges, because Syria knows that developments in the region cannot be predicted or relied upon. Discarding its winning cards under such circumstances is not in line with Syria's national interests. Hizballah in Lebanon is now stronger than before. Every plot hatched by the Zionists and agents to remove it from the political arena and from the battlefield have failed, because Hizballah is now part of political life; its representatives have won seats in the Chamber of Deputies. The Damascus-based 10 Palestinian factions opposed to the Gaza-Jericho agreement continue their activities.

Official Zionists circles themselves have stressed that the Zionist forces will not completely withdraw from the Golan Heights even if stability were to return to the region and even if ties were to be established between Damascus and Tel Aviv. Even when we consider all these factors, it cannot be ruled out that the Geneva summit may reach important and fateful results as did the Bush-al-Asad summit. Anyway, the final say regarding Jerusalem and Palestine will be determined by the Islamic peoples in the region, primarily the Palestinians.

Joint 'U.S.-Syrian Pattern' Viewed

NC1601090994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Commentary prepared by the News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton are to meet in Geneva today to discuss the process of compromise and the so-called Middle East peace talks. This meeting was arranged during a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to Syria two months ago. After the U.S. guaranteed that the peace process would continue within the framework of the Madrid Conference principles, Syria agreed to the al-Asad-Clinton meeting in Geneva and to resume talks with the Zionist regime in Washington.

America's agreement with the principles of the Madrid conference means the acceptance of the joint U.S.-Syrian pattern and the rejection of the Israeli pattern. Actually, the joint U.S.-Syrian pattern is manifested in the Madrid conference, which stipulates two points: peace for land and the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. The Israeli pattern, however, emphasizes bilateral and separate talks and secret diplomacy, a good example of which is the Gaza-Jericho accord.

The Syrians believe that with the non-implementation of the accord between 'Arafat and the Zionist regime, the Israeli pattern has been somewhat discredited; and the emergence of differences between representatives of the PLO and of the Zionist regime on the interpretation of each article in the pact has laid favorable groundwork for Syria to move the talks once again into the framework of the United Nations.

Syria has strengthened its position prior to the talks. By hosting the conference of the foreign ministers of the six plus two countries [six Persian Gulf countries, plus Syria and Egypt] in Damascus, Syria mustered their support for its stances; and with its important role in Lebanon and in mobilizing those Palestinians who oppose the Gaza-Jericho accord, it can claim that it is playing a significant regional role in solving the Middle East crisis.

Political observers believe that even though the United States agrees with the Syrian pattern and supports the implementation of the Security Council resolutions, nevertheless as long as Washington does not want to put pressure on Tel Aviv, the current talks in Geneva will yield no results. So far the Zionist regime has not agreed to implement Resolution 242 and to immediately and unconditionally withdraw from Syria's Golan Heights. Thus, political analysts are not optimistic about the outcome of the meeting of the Syrian and U.S. heads of

state in Geneva. But of course, a change in the U.S. stances on Syria at the Geneva talks could yield a different result.

Deal Will Fail To Bring Peace

LD1701130894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1107 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Although the meeting between the leaders of America and Syria in Geneva yesterday was portrayed as a positive event by the two countries, and although it might be considered a highlight in relations between Washington and Damascus, neither side has spoken of the meeting as an important and fundamental development in the efforts for the Middle East deal.

The lengthy talks between Clinton and al-Asad—that were held in two sessions, first accompanied by senior political delegations of both countries, and then on private and personal basis—were in fact preliminary discussions for bringing closer the views of the two countries on issues such as the crisis in the Middle East, the plans and efforts for a deal, and expansion of bilateral relations.

Many political observers believe that no great deal should be expected from yesterday's meeting between the leaders of Washington and Damascus, and without doubt, if they had reached unexpected results in the talks—the prospects of which are not strong—it would not be possible to announce the results in the short term, and this would need at least several months.

Basically, evaluation of talks held behind closed doors are made on the basis of official and open remarks of the participants usually made for the press, but these will definitely fail to present a full image of the secret discussions.

In a joint news conference at the end of their meeting, Clinton and al-Asad emphasized the need for a brave peace in the Middle East region, but also acknowledged the existence of differences of views and interpretations.

The Syrian president said: We want a true peace that would live, guarantee the interests of all sides, and re-acknowledge the rights of everyone.

Hafiz al-Asad also said the return of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights to Syria was not sufficient for a comprehensive peace, and emphasized that according to historic facts, individual peace and minor solutions cannot establish true peace for the region.

In his turn, the American President referred to the key Syrian role in establishing a deal in the region.

The repeat of the Syrian stance by its president, and following his meeting with the American President, indicates that not only fundamental hurdles have not been removed on the path of a deal in the Middle East crisis, but also the meeting has not had an extraordinary achievement for American Middle East efforts.

The only practical achievement of the meeting-for-a-deal between Clinton and al-Asad was the resumption of talks in Washington, which itself resembles a thin thread that neither America nor Israel wish to break, and which Syria prefers to hold on to rather than hold individual talks with Israel.

In reality, the main hurdles in the Middle East region exist manifestly, and historic experience proves that until the real hurdles are not removed peace will not return to the region and signing of the so-called peace agreements cannot have a fundamental effect.

The signing of a peace accord between Egypt and Israel in Camp David 16 years ago and the signing of the Gaza-Eriha autonomy agreement in Washington four months ago have failed to bring the Middle East crisis to an end or to stop the regional wars that are related to this crisis.

The signing of these agreements have, in fact, led to the fall of elements such as Saddat and 'Arafat and their followers without allowing American and Israelis to achieve their aims.

The signatories of peace agreements with Israel not only failed to bring legitimacy for the usurping Zionist regime but lost their own popular, political, and practical legitimacy and intensified their own crisis.

In other words, although they held a superficial concern for confronting Israel until a deal was made, after signing [the peace agreements] they were confronted with a domestic crisis and had no opportunity to continue their rule.

It is not possible to solve the Middle East crisis on paper and this will not come about through a deal with the Zionist regime.

Those concerned about the historic Middle East and Palestinian struggle should concentrate on the destruction of the Zionist regime and the correction of the region's geo-politics.

In short, and finally, it is possible to say that the most important and practical achievements of the Geneva meeting were in the possible expansion of relations between Syria and America, rather than a fundamental change in the regional process.

This is so, despite the fact that America and Israel will try to exploit the meeting for their own particular ends.

U.S. Aims, Interests Examined

NC1701213494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Commentary by Beirut correspondent Muhammad Bishkar]

[Text] The outcome of the Geneva summit yesterday between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton has created the impression that what took place was a discussion of broad matters and that the summit never touched on the minute details which confuse the Middle East's problems. Such details were left for committees and subcommittees and for the two countries' foreign ministers. This means that the implementation of what has been agreed upon will take a long time, and this in itself dampens the hopes of Arabs and non-Arabs who are in a hurry to normalize ties with Israel and make peace with that country.

The United States said what it wanted through its president, and the Syrian president said what he wanted, but what the two sides desire do not concur in substance, although the U.S. media tried to show superficial agreement between the two presidents at the Geneva summit.

The problem with the United States is that it is not neutral in the conflict with the Zionist state but is supportive of this state in political, economical, and security areas. The United States' aim in the peace process, which was launched in Madrid over two years ago, is only to perpetuate Israel's strength on all levels at the expense of Arabs and Muslims. This obvious U.S. stance, which has been manifested numerous times in U.S. policy on the region, is alone capable of undermining the peace process if the opposite side is the Syrian stance that contradicts the aims of U.S. policy in the region.

As for Israel, where U.S. envoy Dennis Ross rushed to convey Clinton's assurances to its officials a few hours after the Syrian-U.S. summit, it is practically sure of the U.S. Administration's intentions toward it and of Washington's policy that gives it an important role in the Middle East's leadership. Israel does not object to agreeing with Syria and other Arab countries to normalize diplomatic, economic, and even social ties. But so far it is not ready to give the Arabs any (?concession), not in terms of land, security, or economics.

If anything, the Geneva summit shows the United States' extreme concern to make the region's settlement process a success in line with its own interests and domination of the region's resources and wealth.

Commentary Views U.S.-Syrian Contacts

NC1701090494 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 5 Jan 94 p 12

[Hasan Fathi commentary: "Clinton, Hafiz al-Asad in Quest of Peace"]

[Text] A while ago it was announced that the U.S. Secretary of State is to travel to the Middle East. Contrary to some analysts, we wrote that this visit would exert a positive effect on the trend of Middle East talks, similar to the previous visits.

The previous visit by Christopher culminated in the signing of the accord between Rabin and 'Arafat on autonomy for Gaza and Jericho. The latest visit resulted in setting up a meeting between the presidents of the United States and Syria, Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad, in Geneva.

The two presidents are expected to meet in Geneva at the end of January to exchange views on the Middle East peace talks, which have been described as a turning point in the Middle East.

This meeting comes at a time of stalemate in the Middle East talks. 'Arafat's opponents—who are being supported by Syria and by the Government of Lebanon and Hizballah who are involved in this conflict—have not yet shown any inclination to compromise. In view of the current situation, if the meeting between the heads of the United States and Syria takes place and is successful, it could be considered a turning point in the Middle East, because we would then witness some changes in the region.

Syria and its President wish to be considered the leaders of the Arab world and to have the key to peace or opposition to Israel in their hands. One of the reasons for Damascus' opposition to the Rabin-'Arafat accord is the fact that Syria was forestalled by 'Arafat, who shook hands with Rabin before Syria could.

If the covert talks between Syria and Israel that have been going on bear fruit, Damascus will have taken the control of the key to peace and Lebanon may follow their lead.

If the United States now grants some privileges to Syria and remove it from its list of supporters of terrorism, it will be merely because Washington and Tel Aviv are seeking to attract Damascus into the coterie of the peace proponents along with other opponents of 'Arafat, including Lebanon. That is why the 'Arafat-Rabin talks are taking place.

At present Syria is the most important supporter of the opponents of 'Arafat and the PLO-Israel accord. The convocation of the 10-member Palestinian group in Damascus marks the resumption of the opponents' activities. Similarly, the Lebanese Government, which has problems with Israel over its southern border, is following Syria's policy. In the event Syria joins the peace trend, the groups opposing 'Arafat as well as Lebanon will be forced to resolve their problems with the Zionists and to halt their opposition.

Syria wants the withdrawal of Israel from the Golan Heights, which have been occupied by the Zionists since the 1967 six-day Arab-Israel war, after which they were annexed by the Zionist regime with the endorsement of their parliament. Israel has given some guarantees to Syria in this regard, but Syria needs the United States to intervene and endorse these guarantees; that is why Hafiz al-Asad and Clinton are going to meet and exchange views.

If Hafiz al-Asad can obtain sufficient guarantees from Clinton in Geneva, he will certainly join the peace trend without doubt. In that case, the old Camp David scenario will be implemented in full, and the problem of the Middle East and Palestine will be completely resolved, in the opinion of the United States. Of course, suppression of the Hizballah and the Islamic movements will be the next stage; and at that juncture, the governments of Syria and Lebanon will have conflicting stances.

Envoy Says Syria Seeks 'Just' Peace for Middle East

LD1601173194 Tehran IRNA in English 1615 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 16, IRNA—Damascus seeks for a just and comprehensive peace for the whole Middle East region, Syrian Ambassador to Tehran Ahmad al-Hasan told Majles Vice-Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Hasan Rowhani here today.

Referring to the talks between the Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and the U.S. President Bill Clinton in Geneva, al-Hasan said that Syria in no way intended to settle only its own disputes with Israel.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rowhani in reply referred to the massive arrogance attacks against both Iran and Syria and said Iran is opposed to the Madrid conference.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran will express its views in an appropriate opportunity," he added.

The two sides also exchanged veiws on the latest developments in the region, and underscored the need for boosting Tehran-Damascus relations in various areas.

Syrian Envoy To Brief Tehran on U.S.-Syria Summit

LD1801100194 Tehran IRNA in English 0921 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 18—An English daily Tuesday said that Tehran expected Damascus to send a special envoy to Iran to inform Iranian officials of the details of Sunday talks between the American and Syrian heads of states.

The morning daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' commented in its editorial on the Geneva meeting between Syria's President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

"Although the details of the negotiations have not yet been made available to the media, all evidences point to the conclusion that the American President could not get the Syrian leader to accept the American point of view as easily he could prevail upon (PLO Chairman Yasir) 'Arafat or his predecessor had been able to make (President) Anwar al-Sadat (of Egypt) yield to the American pressure."

In a press conference held after the talks, President al-Asad held firmly to his rightful stance, demanding Israeli withdrawal from all territories occupied in 1967 six-day war or comprehensive peace settlement with all Arab countries at once.

Turning to the strategem used by the Zionist regime during the past two decades on separate bilateral talks and settlements with individual Arab states, it said "the obvious objective and natural consequence of that strategem is of course to create discord among the Arab ranks."

Turning to President al-Asad's display of awareness of the fact that the American President's promises could not be relied on, the paper said "the gap between what is promised by the American President and what is actually done by Tel Aviv leaders is extremely wide."

"It would of course be quite unwise to pass a hasty judgement on the meeting between al-Asad and Clinton before details of their negotiations are known."

The daily said with regards to the cordial ties between Iran and Syria, "it is quite natural that Tehran should be expecting President al-Asad's special envoy in the coming days with details of the negotiations between the heads of America and Syria."

U.S. Will 'Pressure' Europe Against Iran

LD1501082794 Tehran IRNA in English 0806 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 15, IRNA—An English daily Saturday editorialized on the forthcoming Paris meeting of G7 and said the U.S. will make attempts to divert the attention of Europe from economic bottlenecks that Washington is faced with.

Pointing to the main topic of the meeting which will be Iran's foreign debts, the daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' said it can be foreseen that Clinton's representatives will be using irrelevant issues such as human rights violation, Iran's stance on 'Arafat-Rabin accord and Iran's so-called arms purchases to distract the attention of the Europeans from America's real economic objective.

"The truth of the matter is that in the present economic conditions dominated by a general recession in the U.S. the most urgent objective for the U.S. companies and trusts is to capture the large Iranian market or to have access at least to certain sections of that market", the daily noted.

Therefore, noted the daily, the real objective of the American pressure on the European countries in the Paris meeting is to make them exert pressure in turn on Iran for the purpose of opening up opportunities for the American companies.

Referring to a recent telephon conversation of President Rafsanjani and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, the daily said the chancellor had clearly promised that differences over the repayment of loans between the Iranian and German companies would soon be resolved.

"It is quite surprising to find out that the German central government is acting contrary to the promises of its chancellor and the interests of its companies", the paper concluded.

Saudi Arabian Ties Enter 'New Phase'

LD1601204994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Saudi Minister of Higher Education 'Abd-al-'Aziz al- Khuwaytir, who is carrying Saudi King Fahd's message for Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, called on the Iranian President Saturday evening. During the meeting, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani pointed to regional issues, as well as falling world oil prices, as among the most basic issues that warrant cooperation among all Muslim countries, especially Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Iranian president also stressed the need for greater unity and cooperation between Islamic countries.

The meeting between the Saudi minister and the Iranian president has attracted the attention of many political observers. Though Iran-Saudi Arabian ties have undergone several ups and downs during recent years, the trend of events of recent months reveal that the two countries' officials, in view of the significance of Iran-Saudi unity and the need for expanding bilateral cooperation, have opened a new phase of bilateral ties with the intention of reinforcing unity among Islamic countries and overcoming the problems of the Muslim world.

Iran-Saudi ties basically have wide dimensions, since they are the major oil-producing countries among OPEC members. In connection with oil production, analysts believe cooperation between Iran and Saudi Arabia, with the largest oil and gas reserves in the world, can play a significant role in stabilizing oil prices; so much so that economic experts say the two countries can have a great impact on checking the falling price of oil, stabilizing it on the world market.

Besides, the two countries' membership in the Organization of Islamic Conference, the OIC, further reveals the significance of bilateral relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia. This is so because, if the two countries reach a ground for bilateral understanding, their key and effective role in improving the situation of the Muslim ummah [community] will become undeniable. Therefore, under the present conditions, when bloody fighting in some Islamic countries has created a difficult situation, the (?power) of Muslim ummah coordination among the OIC member states, especially Iran and Saudi Arabia, can be of special significance in following up the problems of Muslim nations. It is worth noting that during the meeting, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani welcomed the deepening of ties in the areas of mutual interest, stressing the need for the exchange of economic and political delegations between the two countries to bring the viewpoints of Iran and Saudi Arabia closer. The president said he would send a special envoy to Saudi Arabia soon to hold talks on issues of mutual interest and to present a message to King Fahd in response to the one sent by the Saudi king.

Rafsanjani Receives Saudi Education Minister

LD1501175094 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani this evening received the Saudi Arabian education minister, Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Khuwaytir, who is carrying a written message from King Fahd for him.

In the meeting, the president referred to the need for the further strengthening of unity and cooperation among Islamic countries to help resolve problems of the world of Islam and said: Regional problems and falling oil price throughout world are among the most important issues that require cooperation and exchange of views among Islamic countries, particularly Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani pointed out the need for the exchange of political and economic delegations between the two countries to bring the views of Iran and Saudi Arabia closer together. He welcomed the deepening of bilateral relations in the issues of mutual interest. He said: I will, very soon, send a reply to King Fahd's message via a special envoy for holding discussions on the issues of interest to the two countries.

During the meeting, the Saudi Arabian education minister submitted the written message of King Fahd and expressed the hope for the expansion of the two countries' relations and cooperation in the future.

Commentary Examines Efforts To Continue Afghan Mediation

LD1501213694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] While mediation efforts are under way to bring an end to the recent fighting in Kabul, the sides involved in the clashes have offered their conditions for ending the fighting.

According to a spokesman for the Afghan prime minister's Hezb-e-Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan], the president should step down, a transitional government set up, a national army formed, and elections held after six months.

Meanwhile the spokesman for Jami'at-e Eslami [Islamic Society of Afghanistan] led by President Borhanoddin Rabbani, says Mr. Rabbani will remain as president, and stressed that the government will accept the ceasefire if the opponents remove their heavy weapons from around Kabul.

This is at a time when it does not seem the two sides can come to the negotiation table under the bases of conditions they have proposed.

What complicates the situation is the two sides' unwillingness to compromise under demands because of the sensitivity and significance they attach to their political positions.

It seems impossible to reach an agreement on the basis of good will as long as a climate of forgiveness is not allowed to prevail over the inter-Afghan parties' relations.

According to observers of Afghan affairs, a change in the political situation in Kabul cannot help create peace and push forward peace objectives either, because it is hard to conceive an end to the war as long as political objectives are being achieved through the use of arms and military force.

Experience, however, shows that under such difficult conditions faced by Afghanistan, friendly and neighboring countries—not withstanding their divergent views of the sides involved in the fighting—have been able to persuade them to hold negotiations. The ongoing war in Kabul will lead to the same conclusion.

According to the special envoy of the Iranian foreign minister to Kabul, all sides have welcomed the mediation efforts of friendly and neighboring countries.

Mr. [Mohammad Ibrahim] Taherian [Iran's special envoy for Afghan affairs] returned to Islamabad on 12 January after meeting the leaders of the warring sides in Kabul. In an interview, he said it is not ready to persuade the two sides to hold negotiations.

He reiterated that the Iranian Foreign Ministry is trying to create the ground for carrying out mediation between the Afghan groups through consultations with the officials of the Pakistani Foreign Ministry and other Islamic countries.

Tehran Begins Mediation Efforts on Tajik Conflict

NC1501183494 Paris AFP in English 1413 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan 15 (AFP)—Iran has launched mediation efforts to end the conflict between the Islamic opposition and the government in Tajikistan, Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Maleki [spelling as received] said Saturday.

Iranian officials had already held talks with Tajik opposition representatives and were due to meet with Tajik government officials on January 24 or 25, he said.

The initiative followed a request from four Moslem Central Asian states—Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan—for Iran to play a more active role in ending the conflict, during a visit to the region by Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi- Rafsanjani in October.

Maleki said Iran was concerned about the situation and was determined to use its influence to restore security to Tajikistan.

The results of the discussions would be conveyed to the four Central Asian states, Maleki said, and if necessary a summit meeting would be held.

Pro-communist forces seized power in Dushanbe in December 1992, toppling the ruling coalition of democratic and Islamic forces.

Uzbek President Islam Karimov has called for direct talks between the communist-dominated Tajik government and the opposition, mediated by "influential Moslem states such as Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan."

During Rafsanjani's regional tour Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev also asked Iran to help end the crisis in Tajikistan.

However, Iran has adopted a low profile toward the conflict to avoid antagonising the former Soviet Central Asian countries, with which it has been trying to boost economic and cultural ties.

A Russian special envoy, Yevgeniy Primakov, visited Iran in August for talks with Iranian officials on defusing tension on the Tajik-Afghan border.

A UN special envoy also visited Iran for talks on the conflict last August.

Envoy, UN Official Discuss Afghan Peace Efforts

LD1501210594 Tehran IRNA in English 2003 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Islamabad, Jan. 15, IRNA—Iran's special envoy for Afghan affairs, Mohammad Ibrahim Taherian, and the United Nations Secretary General's envoy for Afghanistan Mosorees here Saturday emphasized their mutual feelings on the need for returning peace to Afghanistan.

The UN envoy lauded Iran's efforts, and added that the United Nations is willing and ready to do whatsoever that is necessary for returning peace to Afghanistan.

The past two weeks have seen the bloodiest ever fighting between forces of Afghan interim President Burhanoddin Rabbani and Uzbek militia chief 'Abdol Rashid Dostam.

Pakistan Army Commander Arrives on 5-day Visit

LD1401145894 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in English 1430 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] Pakistan's army commander, General Abdul Wahid, arrived in Tehran today for a five-day official visit.

The Pakistani army general was welcomed by the IRGC [Islamic Revolution Guards Corps] ground force commander, brigadier-general Jafa'ri.

During his stay in Iran the Pakistani military official will hold dialogues on matters of mutual interest and visit some military installations.

Rafsanjani Receives Commander

LD1801111194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani has stressed the need for exchange of views and all-embracing cooperation between Iran and Pakistan to help toward solving the region's difficulties including Afghanistan and Kashmir.

Speaking at a meeting this morning with General Abdul Wahid Kaker, Pakistani Army chief of staff, the president referred to the joint cultural, religious, and historic heritage of the two nations of Iran and Pakistan. He said: In view of the talks held regularly between the two countries' high-ranking delegations in Islamabad and Tehran and the important agreements reached as a result, it is expected that we will in future witness practical progress in political, economic, and cultural cooperation between Iran and Pakistan.

The president also stressed the need for greater cooperation between the two countries' border forces to combat the merchants of death [drug traffickers].

According to a report of the Central News Unit, in the course of this meeting, Pakistan's chief of staff referred to the significance of strengthening friendship and cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. He said: Decisive action against drug traffickers and maintaining security of the two countries' joint borders are priorities in the cooperation between Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Afghan, Iraqi Refugees To Be Repatriated

LD1801132994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] The director general of the Interior Ministry's foreign nationals and emigrants department said today at a seminar attended by the heads of this organization's representative offices from all over the country: The Islamic Republic government is ready to repatriate more than 700,000 Afghans and 50,000 Iraqi refugees to their countries next year [beginning 21 March 1994], if the refugees agree to return home.

According to our correspondent, at the time of the United States' military attack on Iraq, the number of immigrants and refugees seeking asylum in Iran reached 5.5 million. However, more than three million of them have gradually returned to their countries and at present there are about 2.5 million foreign nationals and refugees in Iran. Of this figure, 1,850,000 are Afghans, 645,000 are Iraqis, and 65,000 are from other countries.

At today's session of the seminar the interior minister said in his speech that refugees will continue coming to Iran until political and economic stability returns to our neighboring countries.

Majles Approves Accords With Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan

LD1801121694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Excerpts] The bill to amend the law of facilitating admission of the combatants and volunteer basij applicants to the universities and higher education institutes was raised at today's open session of the Islamic Majles, and its generalities were approved. [passage omitted]

Also during today's session, the deputies approved two bills on cultural, scientific and educational agreements between the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Governments of the Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. [passage omitted]

Visiting Azerbaijani Official on U.S. 'Plots' Against Iran

LD1801092694 Tehran IRNA in English 0628 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 17, IRNA—Head of Azerbaijan's Academy of Sciences Salayev Elder Monday [17 January] said "selfish and baseless" propaganda of the U.S. and the west are aimed at hatching plots against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Speaking at the seminar on the process of developemnt in Central Asia and the Caucasus, opened here Monday morning, Elder noted that the U.S. and the west were thinking in vain to obtain their goals through Caucasus. The Azeri official told IRNA that plots hatched by the U.S. and the west were threatening unity among Muslim populated republics in Central Asia. He said what is presently hindering the process of development in Central Asia is attempts made by Russia to seperate the Muslim republics from Iran.

Foreign Minister's Letter to Armenia Detailed

NC1401214294 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1800 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] The Armenian Foreign Ministry press and public relations service has reported that Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati sent a message to Armenian Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan on 13 January. The message says: Being a supporter of the establishment of peace in the Caucasian region, last year Iran used its mediation efforts to attain this important objective.

Dr. Velayati also noted that war and bloodshed have had harmful affects on Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the continuation of the conflict could disrupt relations between all the regional countries, and could be used as pretext by those who want to (?escalate) the crisis.

Next, the message highly assessed the Armenian Republic's important and valuable role in the effort to establish peace and stability in the Karabakh conflict zone. In this connection, Dr. Velayati noted that his country is ready to take all possible steps [passage indistinct].

At the end of his message, Dr. Velayati referred to Iran's (?efforts) to bring about the immediate termination of the military operations and bloodshed—which is one of the principles of Iranian foreign policy—and hoped that in the new Christian year [words indistinct].

Aliyev Welcomes Iran's Mediation Efforts

NC1601065694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] The president of Azerbaijan has said that Baku welcomes mediation by regional countries, and specifically by the Islamic Republic of Iran, for peace in the region. IRNA reports that in his meeting with the director general for CIS and Caucasian affairs in our Foreign Ministry, Geydar Aliyev said that, as in the past, the Republic of Azerbaijan still wants to resolve the war with Armenia through talks.

During the past few days, the Azerbaijani army has liberated parts of the occupied territories in the republic and has pushed back the forces of the Armenian army. Stressing the need for the expansion of multifaceted relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, Geydar Aliyev called for the signing of a border agreement between Tehran and Baku.

Commentary on Possibile Martial Law in Algeria

NC1801100194 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 18 Jan 94

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentaries Group]

[Text] Algerian Defense Minister General Zerval [title and name as heard] announced yesterday that if the talks between the government and some opposing factions on the subject of an interim cabinet and its term of office achieve no results, the Armed Forces will not remain indifferent. This implies that in two weeks, when the period specified by the Algerian Ruling Council expires, the Armed Forces may directly assume power.

Political observers say that the Algerian defense minister's threatening remarks, even if they are put into practice, will not have a very significant effect on the country's political scene. Since the Boumedienne coup d'etat in the sixties, the Algerian Armed Forces have held the reins of power and even now are the power behind the Algerian Ruling Council. The threat that the Armed Forces may enter the fray directly will change little in the circumstances.

And the Algerian Armed Forces have a very (?defensive) position in the crisis in the country and cannot become a very active force in resolving the Algerian crisis. The Algerian Armed Forces are not a homogeneous body and are politically polarized between the government and the Islamists and are thus plagued by an overt dichotomy of loyalties.

This issue, which has spilled out of the country, and the imposition of conditions by international powers on the Algerian Ruling Council, undermining its position, could be the real reason behind the remarks by the Algerian defense minister. In other words, his allegations seem to be more propaganda, aimed at projecting the impression that the Algerian Armed Forces enjoy a unified capability that can enable them to assume power in the country.

Some political observers believe that the defense minister's recent remarks relate to the resumption of the negotiations between the government and the opposing factions on delegating power and on the length of the tenure of the interim government. These talks, which began months ago, have failed to achieve any outcome. The Algerian Government has not extended an invitation to the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and by providing privileges to other factions, it seeks to elicit support for the current illegal government and thus forge a united front and an extensive coalition of non-Islamic factions. Thus, it is striving to replace the Ruling Council with a strong non-Islamic coalition.

The threatening remarks of the Algerian defense minister a few days before negotiations between the government and the opposing factions resume may aim to motivate the opposition to accept the government's wishes. By not including the FIS, the key player in Algeria, which enjoys legitimacy and a popular base, these talks are doomed to fail even before they begin. The only development that has taken place with regard to these talks is that by exposing the government's weakness and a significant tilt in the balance between the government and the Islamists, the non-Islamic factions are not ready to gamble away their future.

The most important faction participating in the talks between the government and the opposition, the Socialist Front, recently announced its abstention from these talks and other factions are in the midst of deciding whether they should participate in the upcoming talks. This has placed the Algerian Ruling Council in a major political quandary, because it has invested much to achieve even half-baked legitimacy by seeking to elicit the support of the other secular factions. This hope is likely to become chagrin.

If the Ruling Council is defeated on this path, it's only choice will be to extend its tenure for a third time, without recourse to the will of the people, or to think more intelligently and delegate power to those who are popularly elected.

Foreign Ministry Official on Ties With South Africa

LD1701191894

[Editorial Report] Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian at 1600 GMT on 17 January carries in its "World of Politics" program a recorded interview with Mohammad Mahdavi, Foreign Ministry director general for Africa, on relations with South Africa.

In reply to a question as to what led Iran to decide to establish ties with South Africa, Mahdavi says: "It should noted that diplomatic ties have not been established with South Africa. After the elections in April 1994, when the deprived and suffering people of South Africa have attained their rights and taken over the management of the country, we will, God willing, establish diplomatic ties with South Africa. But what was recently approved in the country and brought to the attention of the people was the lifting of the restrictions we had on our economic ties with South Africa."

Mahdavi then comments on the events leading to the forthcoming free elections and abrogation of apartheid in South Africa.

On the reason for Iran's decision, he says: "What led us to decide to establish economic ties with South Africa was, first, the recent events in South Africa and, second, the direct request of the combative groups in South Africa, who wrote to us and asked us to lift the restrictions on trade with South Africa. However, we have deferred the establishment of diplomatic ties, which will be the main basis of relations between our country and South Africa, until after the elections, when every black person has attained his rights there."

Asked about Western media propaganda about Iran's u-turn in its policy on Israel and South Africa, Mahdavi says: "They, themselves, know that they are not being truthful and that what they are saying is not correct. We have declared our stance on these two from the start. About South Africa, we said that when racism is abolished there and the oppressed and innocent people of South Africa take over power—on the basis of one man one vote—we would establish diplomatic and economic ties with that country. And we are moving in that direction now. However, our stance on the Zionist regime has been clear from the start. His holiness the imam said that the Zionist regime must be destroyed. Yes when the Zionist regime is destroyed and the people of Palestine take over power, our relations with the people of Palestine—which is now occupied, but will then be free—will be established."

DPRK Delegation Arrives for Weapons Talks

PM1701110194 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Jan 94 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "North Korean Delegation Visits Tehran To Consolidate Military Cooperation"]

[Excerpt] London, Tehran, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Sources in Tehran confirmed yesterday that Iran and North Korea were preparing to hold high-level talks on the development of new weapon systems, including medium- and long-range missiles.

The talks are expected to begin tomorrow, Saturday, with the North Korean delegation visiting Tehran headed by Air Force Commander General Cho Myong-nok. The Iranian side in the talks will be headed by Revolutionary Guard Commander General Mohsen Reza'i.

Gen. Cho arrived in Tehran yesterday at the head of a delegation of 28 scientists, technicians, and officers. This is the first time in a decade that a North Korean high-level military delegation officially visits a noncommunist state.

The issue of additional cooperation in the field of ballistic weapons will top the agenda. Iran had originally purchased about 800 Soviet-type Scud missiles from North Korea but it is now investing in the development of a new version of the Scud-C missile known as Nodong-2 [number as published] with a range of 600 miles, according to Western experts. The new missile can carry chemical and nuclear warheads and hit almost any Middle Eastern capital.

The first version of that missile was scheduled to be tested in Iran last September but the testing was postponed at the last moment, probably because the two parties were worried about the presence of U.S. spy satellites and AWACS planes in the region.

The strength of Iranian-North Korean relations could perhaps be gauged on the basis of the number of visits exchanged between the two countries. North Korea is the only country in the world to have visited Iran's leader 'Ali Khamene'i and all his important aides including President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. [passage omitted]

Accord With Ireland Positively Appraised

LD1401200294 Tehran IRNA in English 1853 GMT 14 Jan 94

[Text] London, Jan. 14, IRNA—The new memorandum of understanding, signed in Dublin this week, offers wide-ranging possibilities in numerous areas of expanding and diversifying economic cooperation between Ireland and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

According to the memorandum, mutual benefits have been identified in such fields as heavy and light industry, mining, agriculture, rural and urban planning, petroleum and oil products, pharmaceuticals, medicine, telecommunications and education.

Proposed are a whole set of possible initiatives through mutual investments, joint ventures, development projects, utilizing the capabilities of expertise, management skills, professional training and courses, holding seminars, conferences and exhibitions.

During the holding of the second joint commission Wednesday and Thursday, Iranian and Irish officials expressed their satisfation with the ever-growing and deepending trend of relations that was attributed to the atmosphere of understanding developed between the two countries.

To take advantage of the opportunities, both sides agreed to increase the exchange of information and contacts to acquaint themselves with each other's markets and expert industries and to maximize the potential offered.

Proposals went as far as encouraging economic and trade enterprises to embark on joint activities for exports to third markets, such as to the newly-independent republics of Europe and Central Asia.

Ireland itself has a population of only 3.5 million, but it has a projected GDP growth of 3 percent this year, higher than most countries in the European Union, of which it is a member.

The major development in economic relations last year was in the reopening of Iran's beef market to Irish exporters, which has the potential of being the second largest after Britain.

The move has the potential of creating a trade imbalance in Dublin's favor, but both sides recognized the need to correct this to expand the volume of business between the two countries.

To this end, Irish officials welcomed the desire for Iranian enterprises to have an active presence in the Irish market and committed to help arrange 'Iran weeks' and exclusive trade fairs to promote exports to Ireland.

Dublin further agreed to consider favorably oil imports from Iran to meet its considerable needs, while the Iranian side expressed its readiness for cooperation in refining and jont investment for the construction of refineries.

Khamene'i Addresses Islamic Guard Corps

LD1601153294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1101 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Address by Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, on the occasion of Islamic Revolution Guard Corps Day amd the birth anniversary of Husayn, the third Shiite imam, to members of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps and the law enforcement forces at the Imam Khomeyni mosque in Tehran on 16 January—recorded]

[Excerpts] [crowd chants: "We are all your soldiers, Khamene'i. We are ready to receive your orders, Khamene'i," and other slogans] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. On this great and auspicious day I sincerely congratulate all freedom-loving and justice-seeking people of the world, and particularly the great Iranian nation, the brave youth of this land, and the offspring of the Koran; that is, the dear guards of the revolution and you, dear participants. [passage omitted]

Today Islam is flourishing in the world. Today Islam is attracting nations to itself as the most brilliant and clear source of hope. Is this a joke, after the passage of 1,400 years? It is due to the blessings of the uprising of Husayn Bin-'Ali. It is Almighty God's wish that, for the first time since the era of Husayn Bin-'Ali, the Koran should rule in the Islamic Republic. Everything that has been done since Imam Husayn's uprising has been an introduction to today for you. All those scholars, thinkers, philosophers, and speakers; all those efforts and all the Crusader wars—throughout it all, Islam was protected and conditions were prepared for today, so that a government be created that is based on divine and Koranic values. You, the Iranian nation, were fortunate to have the opportunity to be trusted, for the first time, with that responsibility. [passage omitted] This is not something that will end. Do not think that the Islamic Republic is going to be destroyed by the utterances of a few simple-minded wishful thinkers who say it is going to end today or tomorrow. No, sir. These foundations are not going be annihilated. [Crowd chants: "God is great;" "Khamene'i is the leader;" "Death to America;" "Death to Israel," and other slogans]

You and I will of course come to an end. Individuals do not go on for ever. The best are those who guard themselves until death. And some even fail to do that. There are all types. Individuals are vulnerable to damage and destruction. However, the basics continue. This Islamic revolution, this Islamic revival has its roots in history, in 10 centuries of effort and struggle. It relies on Islam, and for this very reason today—at a time when, more than ever, Zionist and arrogant propaganda has tried to portray an ugly image of the Islamic Republic,

Iran, Iranian people, us, and everyone—popular attraction toward Islam, in all parts of the Islamic world, is growing at a greater rate than five or 10 years ago. Look at Islamic countries. Look at Muslim minorities in non-Islamic countries. Look at the harsh measures taken by the arrogant powers against Muslims. There is a reason for such severity. If the Muslims were like a body at the hands of the mortician, there would be no severity.

I wish to state that the element of loneliness in the contemporary movement has created a degree of similarity between us and the movement of Husayn Bin-'Ali. Do not fear the loneliness. Do not be scared, for Husayn Bin-'Ali and his companions—for whom we mourn and weep, and whom we love more than our own children—reached the heights of loneliness. The result was that Islam is alive today. The events of Karbala' [where Husayn died in battle] were not limited to a small region but concern a large part of contemporary humanity. Karbala' is now everywhere. Look at literature, culture, traditions, and beliefs, and at people's hearts. Even the man who does not bow down to God respects the greatness of Husayn Bin-'Ali. That was the result of loneliness. He was the height of loneliness. And today you are lonely and today the Iranian nation is lonely and wronged. But its loneliness and meekness does not mean weakness. We are very powerful today. No other Muslim nation—and dare to believe this—is as powerful as the Muslim nation of Iran. No other nation, be it small, large, or with a population of 100 million.

Iran is alone in the world today. The power of the people of Iran today is at its zenith; the same applies to the Iranian Government. The government is very powerful, very dear; those in positions of power in the world pay attention to the Government of Iran. The people and the government are strong and capable; they know what they are doing. At the same time, they are lonely and oppressed. We are alone in the world today. No power in the world supports us today. This does not mean that all the powers in the world are lined up against us; no, do not let our enemies get happy, thinking: Thank God, all the powers are against Iran. Even if this was the case, it would not matter. We have experienced such a situation. No, today all the governments and powers of the world are not lined up against us. There are many governments who feel that, considering the material criteria that they have, it is not in their interest to line themselves up against the Iranian people.

But no one helps or supports our people. The most powerful, arrogant powers of the world confront our people, are enemies of our people. They oppress the Iranian people, they do not take their rights into account, they make accusations against our people. They do not consider our people's good points, and they make a mountain out of a molehill of our bad points. This is the oppression and loneliness of the Iranian people. This oppression and loneliness should make you stronger. I say that this is a blessing from God. Some corruption exists, but the structure of society is healthy. If we were like one of those so-called revolutionary countries of the previous era—today they do not exist...[pauses] There used to be certain countries and governments that were so-called revolutionary, they were supported by one of the bullying powers of that era, the Soviet Union, which supported them. If we were like them, our people and government would have been corrupted. You see today that the people and government have, thank God, remained healthy. This does not mean that there is no corruption among the people or officials; there is to a certain extent, but the structure is healthy, the composition is healthy, the main elementsare healthy; members of the society who occupy sensitive positions are healthy. This is a great blessing. This blessing comes from being alone, from relying on no one but God.

There are two trends. One is the trend of Islam, the Koran, divine values, and spirituality, with the Islamic Republic at its zenith. Officials of this system are standing up under this enormous pressure, strongly and without fear or hesitation. They are happy and do not bow down. This is one trend. The other trend consists of all the satans of the world, all the evil ones of the world. All the mischievous ones of the world belong to the other trend.

There exists a division here. If anyone has any energy, where should he expend that energy? If anyone has anything to say, if anyone can take the initiative, where should he be? If someone inside this faction of righteousness, or outside this faction of righteousness, starts to wage a war on this faction—which is fighting mischief and evil to such an extent—based on the premise that this faction of righteousness has not paid attention to a particular point, or committed a small mistake, error, or even sin, can this be right? Is this not weakening divine power in the line of blaspheming against the blessings of God?

Those who have nothing to say apart from utterances that weaken the front of righteousness, weaken the officials, weaken the government, the president, the judiciary, the Majles, using any excuse ... [pauses] For example, they say: The judiciary issued the wrong sentence in such and such a case; such and such a judge said this; such and such a government official acted in such and such a way. Rather than expending their energy to confront the faction of evil, they use these excuses and use the same energy to fight against the faction of righteousness. Are they not blaspheming against the blessings of God? Don't they deserve divine punishment?

Ahmad Khomeyni Receives Islamic Revolution Guards

LD1601213894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Excerpts] On the auspicious birthday of Aba Abdullah al-Husayn, peace be upon him, and the Guards Day, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni met a group of Islamic revolution guards today.

Referring to the great role played by Imam Husayn in revival of the genuine Islam, he said: Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, by creating the epic of 'Ashura, changed the course of Islam's history for ever to serve the interests of justice-seeking free people.

While offering congratulations to all the Islamic revolution guards on the Guards Day, he added: Our armed forces, by giving up their lives and assets, brought honor and pride to Islam and the country. [passage omitted]

He went on: An important Islamic and national duty today is to assist and encourage the government, to create hope, and to give assurance to people and officials.

Paper Criticizes Besharati Decision To Ban March

NC1601093294 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 30 Dec 93 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "In the Margin of the Interior Minister's Remarks in Majles"]

[Text] The esteemed Interior Minister Mr. Besharati's answer to a question by Rasht Deputy Elyas Hazrati about why students of the Unity Consolidation Bureau [UCB] were not allowed to stage a rally against the United States on 2 November [on the anniversary of the occupation of the American Embassy in Tehran], is worthy of discussion since, as he himself stated, our Islamic revolution is a revolution against world blasphemy and oppression and its symbol—the United States—in the world today. The need for a multifaceted struggle in all its dimensions against the United States was repeatedly pointed out by the founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeyni—may his soul be sanctified—and by Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution. But neither of them said that this struggle should be carried out at a specific time and specific place.

Basically speaking, our revolution is a popular revolution; and when the Muslim people of Iran and the revolutionary strata, especially the combatant students—despite their tastes and political platforms—want to work toward this objective [a popular revolution] within the framework of the recognized laws and regulations of the country, no obstacles should be raised for them. In his remarks, Mr. Besharati listed several reasons why the student rally was banned. But none of these reasons are justifiable, either from the legal or revolutionary aspects.

1. He said: "We disagreed with the rally that the UCB students had proposed because we are in favor of a show of unity by our nation, which can become a powerful phenomenon that can prevent and thwart any aggression or overt or covert intervention in this society and this unity. This was the main reason for our disagreement."

First of all, the rally that was proposed by the students was not to take place parallel with the official march that had been planned, but two days before the official march. But where does it say that permission should be granted for an expression of aversion to the United States on a specific day, at a specific time, and in a specific way?

Also, the UCB is a student organization that is allowed to operate on the basis of our Islamic country's laws; and rallies can be held under any circumstance, on any day, and in any form by requesting permission from the interior minister provided that the rally will not impair public order and security in the country. And if the Interior Ministry—as the executor of law and order—feels that such a request would disrupt national order and security, it should clearly state why it believes so.

There is no doubt that coordination, unity of methods, unity of tastes, and so on are positive and ideal points. But the responsibility that the Interior Ministry has is a legal responsibility. On what points did the students' request for permission conflict with the recognized laws of the Interior Ministry? Should a march against the United States be held only on a specific day and under the supervision of one specific institution? Then what is the meaning of the freedom to express one's views, to protest, and the freedom to hold legal demonstrations? Is the Interior Ministry a legislative or policy- making body or is it an executor of law? If such issues were to be dealt with through such channels, then the Majles should have approved a law saying that demonstrations against oppressive and despotic America should be carried out only in an official manner and through the channels of official institutions.

2. The second reason which the esteemed interior minister gave referred to a circular issued by the representative of the religious leader and the Islamic Publicity Coordination Council's secretary that states that "on the basis of the attached copy of Circular No. ... [ellipsis as published] of the esteemed president, the Islamic Propaganda Coordination Council is in charge of organizing and directing all public and official ceremonies and rallies."

The rally which the students wanted to hold was not of this nature. A number of students, an association, and a legal student formation wanted to march and to demonstrate. This could not be categorized as an official and public march that falls under the jurisdiction of the country's official institutions. Therefore, it was not correct to refer to this circular. If the UCB students had applied for permission to organize an official ceremony on the national level, then naturally this circular would have applied, and whether it is correct or not, the Interior Ministry could have opposed it. But in the students' application to the Interior Ministry there was no sign of the students' intention to hold an official rally at the national level.

3. Another reason given by the esteemed interior minister was that "it is not our duty to safeguard each person under any circumstances and to grant permission and extend facilities for rallies."

First of all, if the request is legal and within the framework of state regulations, then on the basis of law, the Interior Ministry should grant permission and extend the necessary facilities, whether the interior minister likes it or not. Secondly, in this country with its Muslim, revolutionary, and anti-American people, anti- American demonstrations—and by Muslim and committed students at that—are not dangerous; danger emanates only from pro-U.S. elements. Those who struggle against America do not fear the mentors of arrogance. This remark by the interior minister means that had the Interior Ministry not ensured security, the demonstrators might have been attacked and would not have been safe. But it is clear that the devoted Iranian people have nothing to fear, that if there is insecurity it is created by the supporters of America, and that it is the duty of the Interior Ministry to make the supporters of America feel insecure. Our people, our students, and our officials are so broadminded that they are unaffected when they hear what those who explicitly do not consider America to be an enemy and who want relations with it—contrary to the thought of Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified, and what the leader of the revolution has so explicitly stated. But not only do those who utter such words not feel any insecurity, they even resort to various means to express so-called expert views on the topic. Now, how can one accept a situation where certain people who without doubt are Muslim, revolutionary, and committed persons and followers of the leader cannot express their opposition to America as they wish, or accept for this wish of theirs to be considered as an act that spreads discord in the national ranks and that their legal rights be ignored while people like the esteemed Majles deputy Raja'i-Khorasani are allowed to speak without considering their own remarks as being discordant? Just as we believe that any person—whether a Majles deputy or anyone else—can say what he wants within the framework of his beliefs, ethics, and the law and order of this Islamic country as long as he does not insult or act against the interests of Islam and of the country and that he should not feel insecure, in the same way others too should be able to enjoy these rights.

Of course, there are also other points in Mr. Besharati's remarks, which we will discuss at another time. But the main point is that we should act within the framework of the system and of its laws to preserve the rights of the members of this society; and this is only possible when we do not mix personal tastes and assessments with executive decisions.

IRGC Defense Industries Manufacture First Helicopter

LD1501221994 Tehran IRNA in English 2138 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Tehran, Jan. 15, IRNA—The first helicopter made by defence industries of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) will be put into operation by the end of the current calendar year (March 20).

Head of IRGC industrial organization, Reza Irankhah, talking on the eve of 'Revolutionary Guards Day', said that all parts of the 2- seater helicopter except its engine had been made in Iran.

He said the IRGC industries were engaged in military researches, which included building and revitalizing military equipments.

Various kinds of boats, landing crafts and cargo and military vessels were among the equipments being produced by the IRGC industries, Irankhah added. [passage omitted]

Zolqadr Outlines Activities on Eve of IRGC Day

LD1501225194 Tehran IRNA in English 2203 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 15, IRNA—Chief of staff of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), Brigardier General Mohammad Badqer Zolqadr said here Saturday that the infiltration of anti-revolutionaries through the country's western borders has greatly been checked since the deployment of IRGC contingents in the area. The casualties suffered by terrorist elements as a result of IRGC vigilance has increased ten times, and included top ringleaders, he said.

Zolqadr was outlining the corps' activities on the eve of IRGC Day marking the birth anniversary of Imam Hoseyn (peace be upon him) whose selfless struggle has continued to inspire revolutionaries in every age and era.

The prophet's (pbuh) younger grandson who tasted the cup of martyrdom in Karbala in 61 A.H. (680 A.D.) in order to resurrect Islam was born in al-Madinah on the 3rd of Sha'ban (falling this year on Jan. 16) in the fourth year of the Hijra.

Zolqadr said that in the fight against drug trafficking, IRGC personnel have destroyed 50 convoys of international traffickers and seized 14.5 tons of illicit drugs this year.

He added that the IRGC killed in shoot-outs or arrested 940 smugglers in the eastern part of the country in the said period.

New Rule for Military Service Exemption Announced

LD1601175094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Excerpts] With the agreement of the Commander in Chief Khamene'i, the time limit for requesting the permit for permanent exemption from military service in peace time for those who are eligible and avoiding military service, or those who are absent, has been

extended until the end of 1373 [year ending 20 March 1995], on the condition of paying a fine.

Brig Rahimi, the head of the Supreme Office of National Military Service, in an interview with correspondents today, announced the news and added: Those eligible for military service who have received two- or three-year temporary exemptions can, before the end of the term of their exemption and during the time limit stipulated by this regulation, call at the Supreme Office of National Military Service to readjust the financial undertaking they had given to the new approved amount to receive permanent exemption. [passage omitted]

In conclusion, the head of the Supreme Office of National Military Service said: Those eligible for military service and residing abroad who wish to apply to receive permanent exemption from military service during peace time can pay a fine at the floating exchange rate of one dollar to 1,435 rials, the exchange rate at the time of approval of this regulation, and benefit from permanent exemption from military service during peace time.

Police Arrest 17 in Ferdowsi Square Bombing

LD1501162994 Tehran IRNA in English 1554 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 15, IRNA—Law enforcement forces have arrested 17 suspects in connection with a bombing at Ferdowsi Square in central Tehran Thursday [13 January] night as well as shooting at the British Embassy in Tehran on January 9, an official said today.

Four of the arrested were released after preliminary interrogations, Colonel Reza Mohammadi, a law enforcement officer based in central Tehran told IRNA.

Some ofthe detainees have confessed to having links with the Iraq-based terrorist Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO), the colonel said.

Shortly after the bomb blast at Ferdowsi Square an unidentified caller who introduced herself as MKO spokesman in Paris claimed responsibility for the bombing which injured three passers-by, one critically.

The officer disclosed that some arms and ammunition have also beea seized from those arrested.

He said because of the ongoing interrogation it was not possible for him to identify the arrested people by name. But he said they had acknowledged to have received instructions from Baghdad and Paris to carry out sabotage activities throughout Tehran.

MKO members, better known in Iran as monafeqin (hypocrites) have launched a string of terrorist attacks since the fleeing to Paris of Maryam Qajar Azadanlou, the third wife of MKO ringleader Masoud Rajavi.

Among the terrorist attacks launched by MKO members were hijacking of a passenger plane to Iraq, attacks on the French Embassy and Air France office in Tehran, shooting at the British Embassy and two bomb explosions in Tehran.

Commenting on the connection between the bomb blast at Ferdowsi Square and the MKO, Mahmud Javadi, a political expert, said:

"At present, MKO terrorists cannot leave Iraq without getting permission from the Baghdad regime and that Western countries are reluctant to admit members of this criminal grouplet. So the MKO seems to have decided to perpetrate such actions out of helplessness."

Javadi said that the aim of the MKO in committing such crimes was to convince the Baghdad regime that it was still able to involve in sabotage actions inside Iran.

Radio News Will Begin Work in February

LD1701114794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Radio News will begin work soon, Mr. [Mohammad] Hashemi, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Voice and Vision [radio and television], announced this morning in a gathering of personnel from the Voice and Vision's public relations office. He added: Radio News will begin work on the occasion of the blessed 10 Days of Dawn [anniversary of the revolution during the first ten days of February].

Mr. Hashemi said with regards to the need for the creation of Radio News: Because news tends to be generated constantly and because current bulletins are broadcast at specific times, Radio News was felt to be needed, and work on the planning and implementation was set into motion. As a result, this radio will begin work soon.

According to this report, Radio News will broadcast three to five minutes of political, economic, sports, scientific, and cultural news every 15 minutes. Radio News will broadcast between 0630 in the morning and 2100.

The Voice and Vision chief added: At the beginning, Radio News will be received within the boundaries of greater Tehran; efforts will be made to increase its range in the future. Our aim is that much of the news we cannot use in current bulletins because of time limitations will be broadcast on this radio station for the information of our compatriots.

Pakistan

Army Destroys 'Left-Overs' From U.S. Arms

BK1801093794 Islamabad THE NATION in English 18 Jan 94 pp 1,4

[Text] Lahore—Pakistan Army is destroying the left-overs of the American ammunition supplied for the war

in Afghanistan under strict supervision of the US which has flatly refused to hand it over to Pakistan.

In utter disregard for the 11 years' services rendered to the US in Afghanistan, the Clinton administration turned down all offers made by the Pakistan Government to get or even buy the ammunition worth millions of dollars.

US experts are now strictly monitoring the destruction of ammunition which includes mortars, rockets and artillery gun fire.

It is better to destroy them here than to give it to the country which has no strategic value for us now, seems to be the US message. The US, on the face of it, has refused Pakistan's offers in the name of the Pressler Amendment which bars all kinds of military aid to Pakistan.

The Afghans, on the other hand, have refused to return what they think is rightfully theirs now. This ammunition dumped in various areas of Afghanistan has been confiscated by local commanders in Afghanistan.

Sources in the Foreign Office were farious that the 11 years in which Pakistan watched US interests in the region, even at the cost of risking its security, has not won the ammunition which should be peanuts for a superpower like America.

This ammunition was the last of what remained in the pipeline after the stoppage of US supply somewhere in 1990. The supply was stopped when the US felt that the mission had been accomplished after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops. The agencies involved in the exercise were asked to freeze the supply immediately. The ammunition in the pipeline was dumped in various areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Americans, realising that the cost of its transportation back to the US would be too much decided to destroy the material here. But when the time came the local commanders in Afghanistan refused to oblige despite various pressures exerted by the Americans. Pakistan being an ever obliging country has allowed it without any resistance.

Interestingly, the US is not very keen about getting back ammunition from Afghanistan because it fits in the US scheme of things in this region. The US knows that this ammunition will be used in Afghan infighting which serves a better purpose for the Americans, says the source.

But what worries it the most are the lost Stingers which, the Americans fear, might land into loan and other Muslim countries.

A massive witch-hunt is on to trace these Stingers in Afghanistan. Price ranging from Rs [Rupees] 4 million to Rs 12 million is being offered through various agencies to get back these missiles. But this missile retrieval exercise is not so easy a job. An American was severely injured recently when one of Bara-made missiles exploded. In the presence of these fakes, in which ordinary explosives are packed in original body, the Americans are now more careful when they buy them.

Arms Firms Seek 'To Scuttle' U.S. F-16 Deal

BK1401152594 Lahore JANG in Urdu 25 Dec 93 pp 1,3

[By special correspondent]

[Text] Islamabad—Responsible sources say that representatives of the world's leading weapons manufacturing companies have become active in Pakistan after the cabinet defense committee decided not to depend on only one country for defense needs. Various arms producers, through their representatives in Pakistan, are trying to influence public opinion in a bid to thwart the negotiations for the purchase of the Mirage-2000 from France and SU-27 and MiG-29 planes from Russia. Important institutions in Pakistan have received reports of mysterious activities by representatives of arms companies from various countries of the world. Instructed by company offices in New Delhi, the representatives are carrying out a propaganda campaign in a bid to scuttle the 1989 agreement with the United States for the purchase of 60 F-16 planes and to thwart the negotiations for the purchase of Mirage-2000 planes from France, and SU-27 and MiG-29 aircraft from Russia.

Important sources in Rawalpindi said that political-level talks with France for the purchase of Mirage-2000 planes have ended. Experts of the Pakistan Air Force have approved Mirage-2000 planes as technically suitable for induction into the Pakistani Air Force. Financial details, however, are yet to be worked out and the Government of France and the concerned company have been given a financial package proposal. The sources said that no political-level talks have been held yet with Russia on the purchase of SU-27 and MiG-29 planes. A Russian delegation will visit Pakistan soon during which Pakistani officials will hold talks on the purchase of these planes as well as other matters.

The sources said that the test and trial stage for the SU-27 and MiG-29 planes have not yet begun. It will be after the political-level talks between Pakistan and Russia. Therefore, it is premature to say anything about the suitability of the SU-27 and Mig-29 planes for Pakistan before their test and trial. A senior officer in Rawalpindi expressed the hope that the people responsible for mobilizing public opinion either for or against any issue will act with a greater sense of responsibility when dealing with defense-related matters and will not turn themselves into the tools of elements attempting to exploit the situation after the suspension of the U.S. aid.

Arms Purchases With Sweden, France Discussed

BK1401105194 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 14 Jan 94 p 1, 10

[By Aroosa Alam]

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 13: the wheeler dealers and official teams of European countries are in Islamabad to strike lucrative defence deals with the Government of Pakistan.

This is in the backdrop of the decision of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet to diversify defence acquisition and at the same time allocating a huge amount for defences purchases.

While the Swedish Assistant Secretary of Foreign Affairs is already in Islamabad, French Defence Minister Leotard Francois is due in the Capital on Saturday to discuss the sale of heavy defence equipment to Islamabad. Both are equipped with the assurance that their respective governments would ensure the uninterrupted supply of weapons even during the times of hostilities.

French Defence Minister Leotard Francois will discuss the sale of Mirage 2000-5 and the French Submarine Agosta-90. He is reportedly carrying a confidential letter from his Prime Minister to Ms Benazir Bhutto.

Described as a hurriedly arranged tour this is the first high level visit from Paris to Islamabad after the induction of the new government is Pakistan. During his two-day stay in the Capital, the visiting French Minister, a close confidante of the French Prime Minister Baladour, will hold talks with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and Foreign and Defence Ministers.

Though the visit of the French Defence Minister, handled by the Ministry of Defence, is being kept in a low key, it is believed the French are desperately trying to conclude deals on Mirage—2000-5 for PAF [Pakistan Air Force] and submarine for the Navy.

France is also believed to be offering AMX—its main battle tank to the Pakistan Army.

Meanwhile, Sweden's Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is currently visiting Pakistan to offer Pakistan the best State of Art defence equipment for its armed forces.

The Assistant Secretary of State will be meeting Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to reaffirm Sweden's irrevocable assurances already provided to the Ministry of Defence and the navy a few months ago that the Swedish government will honour the commitment of any defence contract with Pakistan even during a war. He also brought a confidential letter from the Swedish Prime Minister for Premier Bhutto, assuring that the Swedish decision is fully guaranteed through a political consensus of the ruling party as well as the opposition. The Swedes are offering A-19 Gotlond submarine with transfer of technology besides other sophisticated defence equipment.

After carrying out an extensive and objective technical evaluation of the Chinese, French and Swedish submarines, Pakistan navy has reportedly shown its inclination to go for the Swedish submarine, which is considered to be the best.

The defence sources in the capital maintain that due to political pressures, the Pakistan navy may not be able to acquire the Swedish submarine. The sources said that all is set to purchase new type of submarine. Agosta-90 which will be tailor-made for Pakistan since France itself is shifting to nuclear submarine from the conventional submarine.

The second item on French Defence Minister's agenda is shoving down the expensive Mirage-2000-5 on Pakistan. Notwithstanding the apprehensions expressed by the experts time and again, PAF leadership is reported to be all set for Mirage-2000-5.

According to today's BBC broadcast, a contract between Taiwan and France for the sale of Mirage-2000-5 has been cancelled due to some political expediency. Earlier PAF bosses have been arguing that Pakistan would not be the sole buyer of Mirage-2000-5 and Taiwan was also acquiring the same aircraft.

Apparently the French Defence Minister is arriving in Pakistan alone. However, there are reports that the agents and representatives of M/s DCNI of Agosta-90 submarine, Marcel Dassauk of Mirages and OGA have already landed in Islamabad for pulling strings with political and defence heavy-weights.

During the meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, the Prime Minister informed that the army, navy and air force have been given a go ahead to build a viable deterrence by restructuring and diversifying their defence capabilities.

She instructed the Ministry that the selection of the weapons should be strictly made on merit of operational performance with a clear qualitative edge over enemy's fighting platforms.

The Prime Minister directed that in the selection of the equipment, maximum weightage must be given to the fact that selection must be current and of recent induction in the country of origin's armed forces from where the equipment is ordered.

She directed that the equipment ordered from abroad must have life cycle comparable to its country of origin so that the armed forces of the selected manufacturer's country must guarantee that the equipment selected by the Pakistan's armed forces will remain operational for 20 years in their own armed forces as primary fighting platforms.

The Prime Minister further instructed that the transfer of technology must not be a mere lip service but the country offering their equipment must have experience and proof of such transfer of technology to another country.

She emphasised that because of our bad experience during conflicts and wars, the seller must have evidence in irrevocable terms of their government's written

approval assuring that they will continue the supply, support and in-country production commitment during the time of hostilities.

Prime Minister further directed that the selection of equipment must be left to the professionals.

French Minister, Defense Delegation Arrives

Cooperation Discussed

BK1701093394 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 17 Jan 94 p 1

[Text] Rawalpindi—A meeting was held Sunday morning between the French and Pakistani delegations led by the ministers for defence.

The delegations discussed the training of officers of the armed forces in the institutions of each other's country, transfer of technology, possibilities of joint ventures between the French manufacturers and Pakistani counterparts and provision of defence equipment to Pakistan on competitive prices.

The two sides also discussed about the supply of helicopters, Mirage-2000-5 aircraft, manufacture of spare parts of Mirage-III/v at Kamra and Agosta-90 class submarines to Pakistan.

The schedule of the next meeting of joint technical committee was also revised from April 1994 to second week of March, 1994 to work out technical details of all issues at technical level.

Mr. Mirani was assisted by the secretary defence production division, Mr. Mazhar Rafi, director general joint staff, J S headquarter, Lt General Chaudhry Sardar Ali, additional secretaries defence and defence production divisions, Maj Gen. Jamshed Malik and Maj Gen. Ahmed Ali and his counterpart Francois Leotard was assisted by the French ambassador, Mr Pierre Lafrance.

Later, the visiting dignitary was given a very warm send off by the defence minister, Mr Aftab Shaban Mirani, and senior officials of the ministry at Islamabad Airport.

Earlier, the defence minister of France visited Air Headquarters, Chaklala, and called on Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroze Khan, here Sunday.

The visiting minister along with his delegation remained with the PAF [Pakistan Air Force] Chief for some time.

Meanwhile, Jang news Service adds: French government is reported to have allowed Pakistan to purchase all necessary military equipment from French public and private sector concerns.

Sources said talks with the French Companies for the procurement of Mirage-2000-5 fighters, Agosta-90 submarines and other military equipment will be started very soon.

A high level French delegation, including two top officials of French Companies DCN and DCNI, will arrive here on January 24 to finalise deal with Pakistan to provide submarines for Pak Navy.

Sources said Pakistani officials and the French experts' team will hold indepth discussion on all the technical and financial aspects of the submarine deal.

Similarity of Views Noted

BK1601104994 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 16 Jan 94

[Text] French Defense Minister Francois Leotard has said his country fully supports the resolution of the Kashmir conflict in accordance with the UN resolutions. The support was conveyed by the French defense minister during a meeting with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Islamabad yesterday. He expressed concern over the situation in occupied Kashmir. He was also concerned at the situation in Afghanistan and expressed his country's support for Pakistan efforts to bring about peace there. The prime minister briefed Leotard on the situation in occupied Kashmir, especially grave human rights violations by Indian forces there. Benazir Bhutto also apprised him about the Pakistan-India secretary-level talks and said that despite Pakistan's best efforts, India did not play its part for the normalization of the situation. The prime minister invited the French industrialists and entrepreneurs to visit Pakistan to explore the possibility of investment and joint ventures. Leotard told the prime minister that France wishes to establish close ties with Pakistan in all fields, including defense.

Leotard also called on Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ali. The foreign minister expressed his satisfaction at the cooperation between France and Pakistan on defense issues. He apprised Leotard about the situation in Afghanistan and his recent visit to the Central Asian republics of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. Noting the similarity of views between the two countries on various international issues, including Kashmir and Afghanistan, Leotard said he appreciated Pakistan's role in peacekeeping operations around the world.

Saudi Joint Communique Urges Afghan Cease-Fire

BK1701162094 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 17 Jan 94

[Text] Pakistan and Saudi Arabia emphasized the need for an unconditional cease-fire and cessation of all hostilities in Afghanistan. In a joint communique issued in Riyadh and Islamabad simultaneously, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari urged the Afghan leaders to sincerely implement the accord reached in Islamabad, which was authenticated at holy Mecca, as well as the Jalalabad agreement. They urged all the Afghan leaders to cooperate with the Islamic Conference Organization and its secretary general for ensuring and monitoring a permanent cease-fire

as envisaged in the Mecca Accord. Expressing grave concern at the happenings in Afghanistan, King Fahd and President Leghari said the situation has become all the more tragic and a cause of concern as the Afghan leaders had expressed their firm determination to work for peace.

Leghari, Afghan Emissary Discuss Peacemaking

BK1501102994 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1000 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] President Sardar Farooq Ahmad Leghari has said that Pakistan has no intention of interfering in Afghanistan's internal affairs, but it is ready to play a role for peace there with the consent of the Afghan leaders. He was talking to the Afghan president's special emissary, Engineer Ahmad Shah Ahmedzai, who apprised the president about the latest situation in Afghanistan.

Expressing deep concern at the present crisis in Afghanistan, Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari said that the entire Islamic world, including Pakistan, is anguished at the outbreak of fighting in Afghanistan. He said that is why he and Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto have appealed to all the Afghan groups to observe a cease-fire to provide an opportunity to friendly countries to forge an agreement between the rival groups. The president urged the Afghan leaders to adopt the path of dialogue to end their differences peacefully for the sake of preserving Afghanistan's territorial integrity.

Reports say fighting resumed in the Afghan capital Kabul this morning after an overnight lull. A spokesman of Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar has reported further aerial attacks and artillery shelling.

Regional Peace Conference on Afghanistan Proposed

BK1501161994 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 15 Jan 94

[Text] Pakistan has proposed hosting a regional peace conference on Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali told newsmen in Islamabad this evening that he has apprised the visiting Afghan delegation led by President Rabbani's special emissary, Engineer Ahmad Shah Amedzai, about this proposal. The foreign minister said it is the first time that all countries in the region have urged Pakistan to take initiative to end fighting in Afghanistan and restore peace there. When asked about the latest situation in Kabul, the foreign minister described it as bad. He said no one will emerge victorious in these hostilities and he felt that all factions are suffering losses.

Spokesman Denies Border Closed, Views Aid

BK1801092194 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 18 Jan 94 pp 1, 5

[Text] Islamabad (PPI)—A Foreign Office spokesman said here on Monday that the Pakistan-Afghanistan border has not been closed and it is open for those Afghan nationals, who are traveling on valid visas. Those people who want to come without any visa, however, will not be allowed to enter Pakistan. The spokesman added that seriously wounded persons have been allowed to enter Pakistan even without visas or other relevant documents.

The spokesman said Pakistan is cooperating with UN relief agencies to supply food and other relief materials to Afghan refugees in Jalalabad, and a big convoy carrying food and other materials will leave for Jalalabad on Tuesday. He disclosed that Pakistan will set up a hospital camp at Jalalabad to provide medical aid to those wounded in the battle. He added that Pakistan is providing every possible assistance to the Afghan refugees in Jalalabad.

The spokesman said that fighting is taking place only in Kabul; other areas are peaceful and, hence, the people wounded in Kabul can be moved to other areas for medical treatment. There is, therefore, no justification for opening the Pakistani border for Afghan nationals trying to enter the country without any visa. He said Foreign Secretary Shaharyar M. Khan has met the UN representative on Afghanistan and assured him of Pakistan's help in providing aid to Afghanistan. The foreign secretary has also met the high commissioner for Afghan refugees in this regard.

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